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Price per copy Rs. 8/- Editor Dr. (Smt.) Sulochana Rajendran

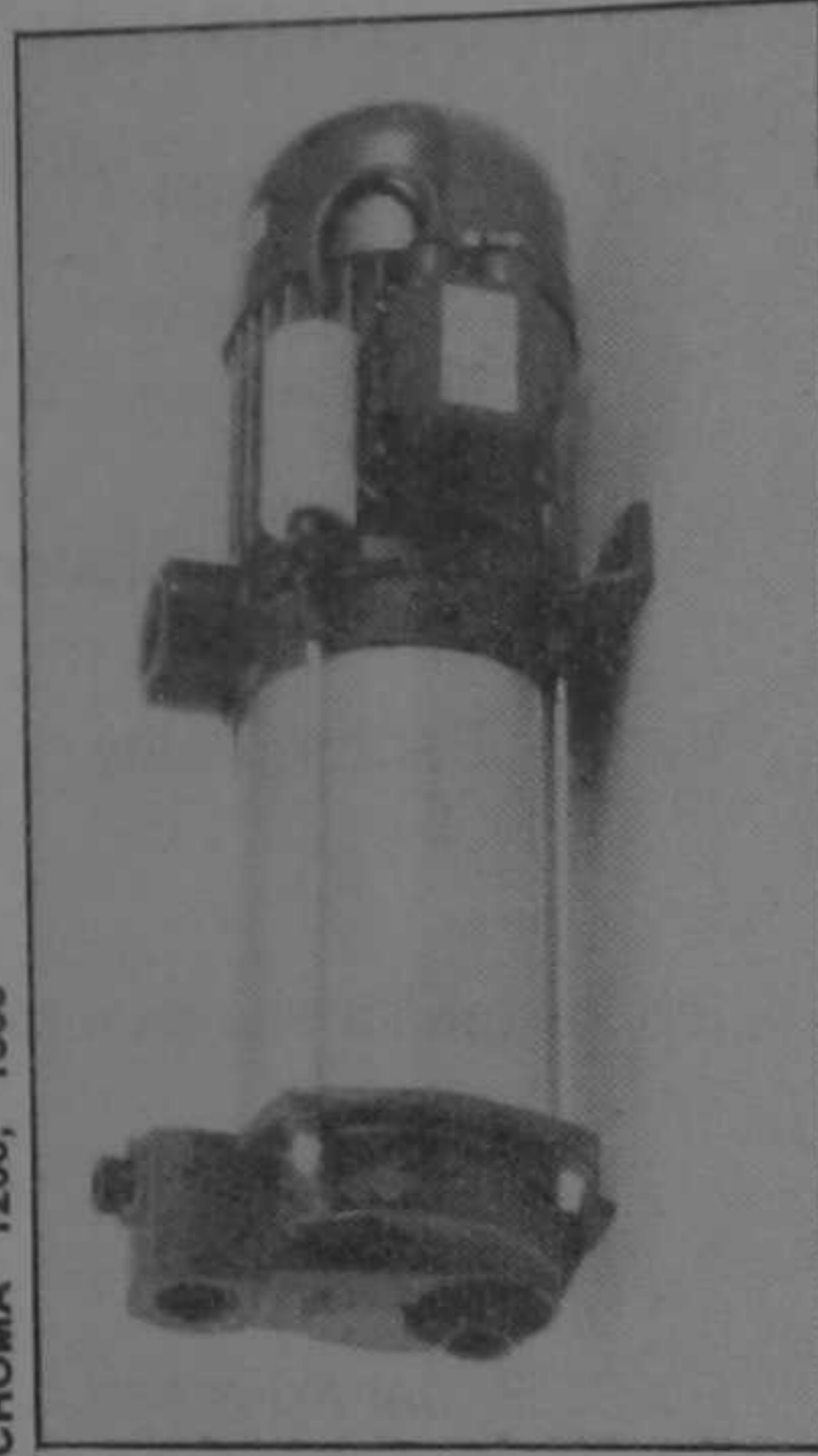
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SHANMUKHA

IN FOCUS

A Very Happy Navarathri and Deepavali to you all — Contributors, Readers, Advertisers and Well-Wishers.

On this happy occasion SHANMUKHA enlightens you with well-knit series of articles

The Thulsi Shatkam of Saint Tyagaraja reveals a wonderworld of Mahatmya of this Sacred leaf. A music -scholar goes deeper into its connotation, brings out its uniqueness, as a leaf, as a goddess and as one 'none can equal.'

'A constantly creative mind which scorned the shackles of mere convention, which took on fanciful flights of flourishes for sheer aesthetic ecstasy.' Maharajapuram Viswanatha Iyer whose Birth-centenary year is currently celebrated blazed new trails enriching Karnatak music in his own inimitable style. SHANMUKHA compiles a concise profile.

As a musical crusader and a worshipper of Subramanya Bharati Pathamadai Krishnan is doing what Pt. S. N. Ratanjankar had attempted, bridging the two systems of music and making a National System, a Bharath Sangeeth. A chic profile is essayed by another 'crusader' of 'Garland' fame.

A renowned musicologist traces the history of Bharata Natyam with the evolution in its repertoire.

Why only a certain set of Karnatak Ragas are adopted in the Hindustani System and not Others? An erudite Scholar musician in both the streams examines this in a Paper presented at a Music Seminar.

What is the mystery that shrouds Kharaharapriya, a Raga that had been in vogue right from Vedic period? A scholar -teacher -performer probes into it.

Plus, SHANMUKHA thinks aloud on Talent Exp(i)osure, carries usual columns of Book Reviews and Cultural round -up.

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THULASI SHATKAM

By. P.K. Srinivasan

Shatkam is a set of six items just as Ashtakam, Dasakam denote a group of eights and tens. The available six Kritis of Sadguru Sri Tyagaraja on Thulasi can be clubbed together to form a Thulasi Shatkam.

These Kritis are:-

1. Devi Sri thulasamma ...Mayamalavagowla
2. Thulasi Jagathjanani ...Saveri
3. Thulasamma Naa Yinta ...Devagandhari
4. Amma Raavamma ...Kalyani
5. Thulasi Dhalamulachey ...Mayamalavagowla
6. Thulasi Bhilva ...Kedaragowla

Amongst these the first four kritis portray Thulasi as goddess and her worship, and the last two extol the importance of worshipping Rama with Thulasi leaves with devotion. Apart from this the fifth viz., 'Thulasi Dhalamulachey' has a special significance. About it later.

Thulasi, the Goddess

According to our scriptures, Thulasi is personified as a goddess, considered very dear to Vishnu, and treated on par with Goddess Lakshmi as an inseparable one. Invariably in almost every Hindu house Thulasi plant is kept and worshipped daily, with Arathi, Naivedhyam, Namaskaram and Pradakshina. A lighted lamp is always kept in the Thulasi Madam.

Restrictions are there for plucking of the leaves. A prayer has to be said requesting her to grant prosperity and stating that her leaves are plucked to worship Kesava who is dear to her. Special worship like Varalakshmi Pooja is carried out in the month of Krithika (Nov-Dec.) on the day after Ekadasi which is known as Brindavana Dvadasi.

The very word 'Thulasi' connotes that none or nothing is equal to her, 'Thulaam

Syathi (naasayathi) ithi Thulasi' meaning one who puts down anything that is tried to equate or compare with her.

In Brahmavaivatha Purana it is stated:

*'Naraa naaryascha thaam dhruishtvaa
thulanaam daathum akshamaahaa
Thena naamna cha thulaseem
thaam vadhanthi puraa vidaah'*

The learned seers were unable to suggest one equal to her and hence gave the name 'Thulasi'.

This Puranic idea Tyagaraja puts in all the first four songs as follows:-

- Song 1. Nee sari Yevvarey - (Charana end)
Song 2. Nilavaramu nee sari velpulerata (Anupallavi)
Song 3. Ee Mahini nee Samanamevaramma (Anupallavi)
Song 4. Nee mahathvamunu gani (Charana)

The very sight of Thulasi plant removes one's sins. Rightly Sri Tyagaraja uses epithets like, 'Jagath Janani, Dhurithapa haarini, Paavani, and Sankari.

Picturesque Description

A fine description is presented by the saint in the Charanas of the Devagandhari song. He gives a warm welcome to Thulasi Devi and requests her to reside permanently in his house, swearing that in this world none is equal to her. He exclaims 'Bangaru Bomma', the one shining like gold. How she must come to his house. This he describes in the first two Charanas: wearing glittering golden ornaments, beautifully clad in silk saree having golden zari border, pearl necklace swinging gracefully on the chest, clasping the hands of Lord Vishnu and showering prosperity on us, with Karuna overflowing in her eyes. Further, he says, in the Charana that he will worship her with fragrant flowers like Maruvaka, Parijatha, Lotus, Kuravaka, Vakula,

Sugandharaja etc. The song is a description *par excellence* and all the Charanas are to be sung, if one has to taste the ambrosia prepared by the Sadguru. But unfortunately musicians stick to the last Charana only, perhaps they have not dived deep into the ocean of Rasanubhava and lack Swaanubhava too!

It is said that all the sacred rivers, gods and Vedas reside in Thulasi. It is worthwhile to recollect the popular oft-repeated sloka uttered while worshipping Thulasi.

"Yen mooley sarva theerthaani
Yen madhye sarva devathaaha
Yadhagrey sarva Vedascha
Thulaseem Thaam namaamyaham"

Tyagaraja in his inimitable style faithfully translates this Sloka and gives us in a fine musical form. Consider the Charana portion of the Saveri Kriti. Each quarter of the Sanskrit Sloka is given in the same order in Chaste Telugu, sweet to hear as it is clothed in music.

"Yan mooley Sarva Theerthaani Charana
Yugambulu nadhulaklu parama Vaikun-
tamada-Your feet (roots) are the best
abodes for all sacred rivers.

"Yan madhye sarva devathaah nee
madyamu Sakala suraavaasa mata" - Your
middle portion (stem) is a residence for all
gods.

"Yadhagrey sarva Vedaascha Siramunu
naigamakotulu chelagu chunnaarata - At
your tips shine all the sacred scriptures.

"Thulaseem thaam namaamyaham
Tyagarajadhi Vara bhaktulu paaderate-Oh
Thulassamma of such divinity! No wonder
your greatness is sung by Tyagaraja and
other devotees.

Above all, Tyagaraja has set this Kriti in Raga Saveri-a Rakthi Raga, to be enjoyed leisurely. It is no surprise that his compositions are called *Thyagopanishad*.

He or She?

Now let us examine the Kriti "*Amma Ravamma*" composed in Kalyani. The name of the Raga itself suggests auspiciousness and prosperity. That the Kriti is

in praise of a goddess is quite clear from the start itself, viz., 'Amma'. And this is repeated five times in the short Pallavi portion leaving no ambiguity. But how from careless handling by the singers of its Charana portion the gender suffers, and with that the meaning too!

Let us examine the Kriti:

Pallavi : *Amma Raavamma*
Thulasamma Nannu Paalimpavamma -
Sathatham padamuley
namminaanamma.

Oh mother goddess Thulasidevi!
Please come and protect me.
I always trust your feet.

In the Anupallavi and Charana her connection with Lord Vishnu and her excellent qualities are highlighted.

Nemmathini neeviha param-
mulosagudhu vanusu Kamma vil-
thuni thandri Kalanaina bhaayadata.

Knowing quite well that You grant happiness here as well in the other world, Sri Hari, the father of Manmatha is not leaving you even in his dreams (*Yoga nidhra*).

What are the special characteristics of Thulasi that makes Sri Hari to adhere to her always? These are listed out in the Charana :

Nee mrudu thanuvunu gani
nee parimalamunu kani
nee mahathvamunu gani - neerajakshi!

Oh Lotus eyed Devi! seeing the softness of your body, considering your sweet fragrance and pondering over your greatness....

"*Thaamarasa dhala nethru Tyagaraja*
mithru"

The friend of Tyagaraja, Sri Hari, whose eyes are broad like the lotus petal, with great affection and respect is keeping You on His head.

Premamutho siramunanu pettukon-
naadata i.e., He has accorded the highest
place to you, a position higher than the
Vanamala and Sri Lakshmi who are on his
chest only.

Usually while singing this Kriti musicians take the last two lines for Niraval and elaborate, following it with Swara prastharas. Then Thani Avarthanam of percussion instruments makes for a grand finale. While doing so we find a sizeable number of musicians of repute singing this line as:- *Thaamarasa dhala Nethri Tyagaraja Mithri* thinking *Nethri* and *Mithri* are attributes to Thulasi Devi, since the song is about a goddess as the start itself suggest, 'Amma'. Almost all the standard books have printed this line correctly and in spite of this the 'HE' of the song is converted to 'SHE' by rendering the text as '*Nethri* and *Mithri*'. In one or two books we may find these words as *Nethrudu* and *Mithrudu* i.e., with the affix 'du' which even then refers to a male only, perhaps more emphatically. Ignorance, carelessness and indifference to the meaning of the Sahithya (text) leads to a portrayal of a ludicrous idea. Who is keeping Thulasi, on whose head and why? Is it Thulasi herself keeping on her own head with Prema? Further, already the attribute 'Neerajakshi' had been used just before the commencement of this line. If so is Tyagaraja such a poor poet as to use immediately another word "*Thaamarasa-dhala-nethri*" conveying the same meaning? Why these musicians do not give even a moment of thought to the text especially when this song is taken as a main item and sung for half an hour with detailed Alapana, Niraval etc., culminating with a series of applauses and commendable reviews!

Greatness of Thulasi

It is difficult to translate the word '*Mahima*' if the depth of its meaning has to be conveyed exactly. The esteemed

position enjoyed by Thulasi leaves is well brought out by Tyagaraja and which is in accordance with our scriptures. According to Vaishnavite Agamic principles, whatever is offered to Lord Hari without Thulasi leaves in it, is not acceptable to Him. In the water that is kept in the vessels of Argya, Paadya and Achamaniya Thulasi leaves must be there, otherwise the water lacks sanctity and is considered as unfit for worship. Though a leaf it is considered as the best of all flowers and hence the Thulasi Mala and Archana. Sri Tyagaraja nicely summarises all these ideas in the lines in the first song:

'*Neevu leka, Sankari! maaramanudu*
neerajaadhulanolladata
neevu leka theerthamu sevinchuta
neeranu peraaayenata'

Not satisfied with this he refers to the anecdote of Krishna Thulabharam. '*Neevu leha thraasuna Sri Hari Sari nilvaka Bhasenata*'. Sathyabhama could not balance the weight of Sri Krishna with all her ornaments and stands perplexed. Rukmani comes to her rescue and the wonder takes place when the balance tilted on her placing Thulasi in a worshipful manner, indicating to the world that Thulasi is not only equal, but is something more than the Lord Himself. That is why our Sadguru uses the letter '*Mahaa*' at the end which joining with the opening word of the Pallavi becomes '*Mahaa Devi Thulasamma*'. Again flowers when once offered at the feet of the Lord cannot be reused. But Thulasi leaves can be offered any number of times, because it is always considered as fresh only even if it becomes dry and brittle.

The Miracle

In the last two songs, Sri Tyagaraja describes the worship of Sri Rama with Thulasi along with other permissible flowers and the pleasure he derives. The song '*Thulasi dhalamulachey*' in

Mayamalavagowla assumes special significance because of an incidence. Walajapet Venkataramana (Bhagavathar) was attracted towards Tyagaraja. He used to bring Thulasi and other flowers for his Pooja from his village Ayyampetai, crossing the river Kaveri. Once during a Sri Ramanavami festival, Sri Tyagaraja was performing Archana with the Thulasi leaves brought by Venkataramana, singing this song 'Thulasi dhalamulachey'. While singing the Charana and as he was doing Archana, to the surprise of his disciples and others, immaterial of what Tyagaraja took in his hands, the Thulasi or the flower in his hands, got transformed into that specific flower which was being uttered by him i.e., as Saraseeruha, Punnaga, Champaka, Paatala, Kuravaka, Karaveera and Mallika flowers and fell at the feet of Rama. Seeing this, Sri Thyagaraja repeated the song and the same miracle happened again. The saint concluded that there must be some specific speciality in the person who had brought these flowers and Thulasi. Immediately Venkataramana was called for and the Saint not only blessed him but also prayed to Rama to grant Jnana to Venkataramana by singing 'Jnanamosagaradha' in Shadvidhamaargini, which is now being sung in Poorvikalayani. The former tune is full of Bhava suited to that occasion praying to Sri Rama while the latter in Poorvikalyani is having the concert appeal to please the audience.

It is recorded that from that day onwards Venkataramana's voice became sweet while before that it was supposed to be harsh and unfit for singing.

Anthyaprasa is the alliteration at the end, rhyming with the subsequent lines. In the Devagandhari Kriti *Thulasamma*, right from Pallavi, we can notice the fine Anthyaprasa as illustrated below.

Pallavi :
Anupallavi
Charana 1

*Nelakona Vamma
Bangaru bomma
Sommulu betti
mudu guriya gatti
Sirulanu Odi gatti
Karamunanu batti
sarulasi Yaada
Gani koni yaada
dhigeesulu veda
ninu prema Jooda*

Charana 2

So far it is all right. But when we come to the last line of the 3rd Charana, in many editions we find that the last line reads as:-

'Varadha ninu pooja sethu'

This is not rhyming with its previous three lines. But if it can be taken as *'Varadha ninu sethu pooja'* then we find a uniform Anthyaprasa of the letter 'ja' as illustrated below:-

Charana 3

*Maruvaka Paarijaatha Saroja
Kuravaka Vakula Sugandha raja
Vara sumamuluchey Tyagaraja
Varadhaninu sethu pooja*

By this change the meaning is not affected in anyway and the Anthyaprasa scheme answers well for the entire song.

It was a pet scheme with Sri Muthu swami Dikshitar to compose a group of songs on the deities he visited and that too invariably as Vibhakthi songs, i.e., in the eight cases of declension of a noun in Sanskrit. Unlike Dikshitar, Tyagaraja had not travelled widely and sung in praises of various deities. But amongst the available compositions of his, we have got very few group songs like Kovur Panchakam and Thiruvottriyur Thirupurasundari Panchakam. Still we can group some songs having same theme and it will be quite interesting to study them collectively as a set instead of individually. This Thulasi Shatkam opens the scope for such study.

THE 'SANGEETA BHOOPATHY'

*Dha Riii.....Dha Saa.....Pa Dhaa.....
Ma Paa.... Maagarisa rimapadha
risanidha..... Pa.....*

That passage in Arabhi. Who would not recognise it as the unsurpassed gift rendered to the world of music by Maharajapuram Viswanatha Iyer? No doubt he reigned as the unchallenged "Sangeetha Bhoopathy".

A "grand cavalier of Karnatak music," he was a free spirit, a free wheeler, wheeling through the musical art with unfettered imagination and punch. Passages unique made certain Ragas his own, such as Arabhi, Durbar, Mohanam, Mukhari, Hamir Kalyani etc. Down the years few including his son Santhanam tried to recapture his style. Recapture he did, but in his own way with 'whispering' nuances. The aura of the Sangeetha Bhoopathy's 'husky dimension' remained elusively his own. In fact, Viswanatha Iyer did not want anyone, his son and disciples inclusive, to imitate him. Rather he made his style inimitable.

This is not to undermine Santhanam's musical acumen. World knows that he rose to great heights in his own right, remained supreme, till death took the toll in the cruel road accident three years ago. As the heir to a great musical legacy Santhanam adapted his music to the trends of his times with much practical insight and modulated his voice to great melodic ends and sustaining results.

Now back to Viswanatha Iyer. The most characteristic feature of his music was the romantic sweep of his imagination. He would seek an odd phrase, an unfamiliar sally with the same zest and thrust as he would the measured time-bound modes. A columnist once observed that, "His lines would shimmer like stardust, his single

notes glow like sparks. And when one least expected it, there would be a phrase like a lightning streak." For him music was expansive. He would not acknowledge melody with fetters. For that matter he cared not much for grammar. It was aesthetics, the 'melodic ecstasy' that he gave great weightage. In which at times he did not hesitate from borrowing nuances from Hindustani flourishes and making them the very part of Karnatak idiom.

One could say with confidence that it was the Apoorva Ragas and those which depended 'for their character on the inventiveness of the artiste' which caught Viswanatha Iyer's fancy. Ragas like Atana, Begada, Bilahari, Darbar, Khamas, Mukhari, he traversed with such creative freedom that he not only invested them with such nuancic beauty on an expansive canvas but also brought to fore the larger scope they afforded to an aesthete. It was Manodharma Sangeetha all the time for him, be it of sustaining, time-tested Ragas like Sankarbharam, Todi, Kalyani or the fanciful romantic melodies of Begada, Darbar and Mohanam, Hamir Kalyani or of more poignant Mukhari and Nayaki.

This 'Manodharma' extended to his rendition of compositions, which gleamed in brilliance, at times even to the ecstasy of the composers. No better instance could be narrated than his rendition of *Brochevarevarura* (Khamas) in the presence of its composer Mysore Vasudevachar, Karaikudi Sambasiva Iyer and Smt. Rukmini Arundale in Kalakshetra. When Viswanatha Iyer rendered it in his own husky vocalism embellishing it with breezy flashes and scintillating patterns, unfolding the Raga's romantic Bhava and aesthetic beauty. (Perhaps Khamas' Bhashanga beauty lent it a touch of class.)

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Moved by the rendering, Vasudevachar expressed:

My composition like a poor girl was given away in marriage years back. When I heard the piece today, I could not believe that it was my girl greeting her poor father after decades as a Sarvalankara Bhushitai.... decked with glittering jewellery of aesthetic grandeur and artistic excellence. I could not identify my own girl on her transformation for a moment.*

Rightly does Garland Rajagopalan interpret:

"The transformation was as much due to the jeweller Viswanatha as to the goldsmith Vasudeva. The hidden beauty of the lyric and the ample scope it provides for nuances were explored to ecstatic heights."

Need it be said that his renderings of Tyagaraja Kritis had their own class quite unsurpassing?

Writing about the Sangeetha Bhoopathy in his book *Memoirs of the Mediocre Man*, the great connoisseur S.Y. Krishnaswamy observed:

"..... Occasionally there is born an artiste whose qualities are unique, personal and non-transferable. Unique because of the exceptional quality which is not found in others, personal because these features are original and not derived from tradition or study and one liable to change rather than stay, and non-transferable as a result of several characteristics including devilry, but the most important of which is the momentary originality of a constantly creative mind which scorns the shackles of mere convention and endows each exposition with a flavour which may or may not be repeated.

"Such men cannot be replaced or followed, nor can they found a school or system. They live and die in a kind of fierce isolation. Shedding a brilliance in their wake which lasts but for the duration, and then become, no more than an aesthetic experience but whose details are only shadows of a scintillation which eludes the strain of recollection".

True, Viswantha Iyer, as his son Santhanam recollected, never taught his disciples. Not even his son. What they learnt was from 'living-in' listening. Then what

composed the great music of Viswanatha Iyer who blazed a new trail?

Reproduced here are excerpts from the essay the founder Editor of SHANMUKHA., Shri K.S. Mahadevan published in the quarterly at the inauguration of the Maharajapuram Viswanatha Iyer Trust by his son Santhanam in October 1985:-

First, his equipment.: Under his erudite guru, Umayalpuram Swaminatha Iyer, belonging to the direct sishya parampara of Sri Tyagaraja, he learnt a large number of Kritis, keyed to the true Tyagaraja tradition. For sheer repertoir, Viswanatha Iyer was unapproachable. This helped him to impart greater variety and breadth to his concerts. He was equally at home in a Tyagaraja kriti as in Ganam Krishna Iyer's and Kshetrappa's padams. Jawalis were almost his metier. His nimble and flexible musical intelligence was ever on the *qui vive* to seize on the subtle nuances of padams and jawalis and savour their vividness and glow and perhaps their voyeuristic flavour too!

Secondly, Viswanatha Iyer reclaimed Karnatak music from the phase of Laya ridden petrification (eg. Pallavis of indordinate length and complex Thala structure) into which it has fallen, thanks to the dominance of Laya oriented music of vidwans like Konerirajapuram with his percussive battery. (Even the giant Tirukodikaval Krishna Iyer is reported to have protested against these unmusical ventures on occasions). The young musician reinstated music to the power and play of imaginative flights and exploration of the aesthetic delights of raga delineation.

Raga is the kingpin of Carnatic music and Maharajapuram had the wit and the hunch to perceive that he could carve out of it a supreme domain for himself. With his unmistakably original mind-a mind that often realised infallibly its exciting visions of raga vistara-and an imagination of extraordinary subtlety, coupled with a unique faculty of musical expression-Viswanatha Iyer explored realms of ragas, seldom even cognitively felt by his contemporaries. He came up with startling discoveries of the spell-binding aspects of ragas like Mohanam, Durbar, Arabhi, Begada, Varali etc., not to speak of the perennial ragas like Sankarabaranam. Thodi, Khamboji etc.

It was said of Franz Liszt, the Hungarian pianist, that he "played with a combination of romantic

*As told by M.D. Ramanathan to M. Sundaresan, Vide SHANMUKHA, April, 1991 issue.

abandon and iron control, which is not a matter of mere technical ability but is rooted in the personality of the artist". How truly does this description fit Maharajapuram! The majestic surge, the broad sweep, the ringing tones clinging to the sruthi and the sometimes incredible degree of scintillation in depicting the contours and content of ragas in Viswanatha Iyer's style established a new aesthetic mark-up in raga alapana. He is still unsurpassed in this respect, even if one includes his disciples. And withal, it was in a pure vocalist style and not fashioned on the Nagaswara pattern at all.

In those delectable moments, one realised Viswanatha Iyer's sense of certainty, bravura and soaring imagination in latitudes not accessible to most others. He, one often felt, took unnecessary and enormous risks when embarking on his raga adventures and made his friends and admirers even nervous about successfully carrying them off. Perhaps, he was actuated by what Yehudi Mehin felt as the need "to liberate myself from prudence and reach the assurance of abandonment to impulse". That surrender to impulse often produced in Viswanatha Iyer's raga essays, especially around the Tara Shadja flashes of shimmering beauty for which G.B.S.'s phrase "summer lighting made audible." may not be a hyperbole.

Unlike many musicians from olden days down to the present, he had an instinctive flair for Hindusthani ragas. He could spin out tunes of ineffable rapture in ragas like Durbari Kanada, Behag, Dwijavanthi, Kafi, Peelu, Desh, Sindhu Bhairavi etc., with that compelling lilt and liveliness so dear to the ears of his loyal rasikas. Viswanatha Iyer could always be depended upon to provide surprises, something or other that departed from the norm, because of his unconventional music mind. His ragamalika slokams, like "Sruthva Guna...." were a chain of beautiful musical fragments and were always looked forward to with anticipatory pleasure. In dwelling on the notes of these plaintive modes, he would approach the keynote with anticipation and leave it with regret, so to say a highly effective ploy. It is no coincidence that he and T. N. Rajarathnam were similar in many respects and both were *sah-ridayas* musically and warm friends on the personal plane.

Thirdly, even in the singing of Kritis Maharajapuram appropriated to himself a kind of monopoly of outstanding and majestic pieces like 'Nannupalimpa' (Mohanam), 'Kshinamaidhiruga' (Mukhari), 'O Rangasayi' (Khamboji), 'Siva Siva Yanaradha' (Pantumarali), 'Nannu Vidachi'

(Ritigowla), 'Undedi Ramudu' (Harikhamboji), 'Kanakanaruchira', the immortal Pancharatna piece in Varali, of which he alone seemed to have the correct 'patanthara', besides 'Chalakalla' (Arabhi), 'Manamuleda' (Hamir Kalyani) and others. He affixed his stamp on all these pieces. In the Niravals, he often let himself go in sweet flights of fancy.

He never suffered from the drawback of predictability or sameness, because of his quicksilver mind and his intuitive feeling for the form and glow of musical phrases. The listener's imagination was often seduced by his admirable creativity. For instance, elements in a song which one never noticed before, would suddenly spring to life in his interpretation of them. He had the knack of displaying the texture of a song much like a jeweller exhibiting the facets of a diamond. The same song in the hands of another musician would seem insipid, after hearing Viswanatha Iyer sing it.

Fourthly, it cannot be too strongly affirmed that Maharajapuram jealously guarded his prerogatives on the platform as the leader. Woe to the accompanist who failed to tow the line properly or tried to assert himself. Any such show of conceit would receive short shrift from him. (This writer remembers a concert in which a very senior violinist of those days played a note off-key and was instantly snubbed by a loud "Sabash" from Viswanatha Iyer) Yet, the concerts in the early decades of this century witnessed a healthy artistic rivalry on the platform for winning the plaudits of the crowd, obtained through genuinely high class displays of excellence. This helped to raise concerts to a high pinnacle of enjoyment.

This is the birth centenary year of the Sangeetha Bhoopathy, and during the decade since its inception the Trust established in his name has made great strides in promoting young artistes, helping aged Vidwans and bringing to fore rare gems of the Vaggeyakaras. The latest in blazing new trail is the felicitation of 'Sabha Nayaks', the behind the scene heroes, who have been instrumental in the cause of promotion of Fine Arts in the modern milieu.

(Compiled)

"A MUSICAL CRUSADER"

BY 'GARLAND' Rajagopalan



Pathamadai S. Krishnan

Pathamadai S. Krishnan is a born crusader in the field of Classical Karnatak Music tireless in his efforts to propagate it in his own humble but unique way. The appellation 'Pathamadai' itself has a significance since that place has been well-known for its mats of exquisite workmanship and matchless beauty. He was born at Shencottai which presented the illustrious S.G. Kittappa - Kasi Ayyar Brothers whose remarkable contribution in the twin fields of music and drama is yet to be excelled. Heredity too lent its grace and legacy to Krishnan. Great grandfather Viswanatha Ayyar was Dewan of Ettayapuram, once a cradle of music, in its heydays when venerable Muthuswami Dikshitar of the Musical Trinity and his brother Baluswamy Dikshitar were received and patronised by the Raja. The Dewan was among the disciples of Muthuswami Dikshitar. Krishnan's father K.M. Subbarama Ayyar and brother Sundaram were musicians. Mahakavi Subramania Bharati was a step-cousin and Ettayapuram Ramachandra Bhagavatar, Guru to the famous Madurai Pushpavanam and many others, was a relative.

Born on October 15, 1921 in such a musical family amidst musical environ-

ments, Krishnan had initial training in music with his father, then with the two Sangita Kalanidhis Vedanta Bhagavatar and Muthiah Bhagavatar and later with A.Anantakrishna Ayyar. Legacy and training enabled Krishnan to commence giving concerts regularly from the age of seventeen both on All-India Radio (December 11, 1938) with which he is 'A' Grade vidwan and elsewhere. To enrich his expertise, he had training in Hindustani music also with Abdul Karim Khan presumably inspired by the Dikshitar-Bharati connections.

Krishnan claims to have evolved a composite Bharata Sangitam integrating the Karnatak and Hindustani Systems in a bid to recall the pristine glory of Indian Music as it obtained prior to the advent of Persian influence—a fusion of the two systems. He is an authentic exponent of Raga, Tanam and Pallavi including *Cakratanam*. Krishnan avers that the Raga Karnataka Kapi has lost its original grace and Swarupa, that Tyagaraja's Kritis *Rama Raghukulanidhisoma* aids in recapturing the original grace of the Raga and that he had identified the real Swarupa at his concerts besides composing a Varnam and Kritis in the Raga. Perhaps a cassette may help musicians in understanding Krishnan's stand.

As regards compositions, 89 Varnams and about 200 Kritis and Tillanas stand to his credit. Dr. Gomati Sankara Ayyar of Annamalai University, Chidambaram, published his Varnams in his book *Tana Varna Kadal* (Ocean of Tana Varnas). Krishnan has himself published some of the inspiring songs of Subramania Bharati tuned and notated by him in his *Bharati Padalgal*. He was Examiner for Music for graduates of Madras University and is associated with Tyagaraja Sangita Vidwat Samajam, Madras.

Age and lack of resources have not quenched his irrepressible rage and urge to concretise the songs of Subramania Bharati and popularise his immense sacrifices. To achieve this, he founded in 1981 the unique institution 'Nadakkanal' (The Flame of Melody) to have concerts with Bharati Songs alone and to honour senior and junior artistes at a festival annually. In the short span of a decade and half, 144 artistes have been honoured with the title 'Nadakkanal'. The credit for sustaining the institution and the tempo goes not to the material affluence of Krishnan but to his inspired dedication to the art and the great national poet, Bharati. The last festival was held on August 15, 1995.

The Chidambaram Dikshitar conferred the unique title of "Sangitaramya Kokilam" on him in 1942 regardless of war conditions as if Bharati's vision of independence was

to prove true! Krishnan composed on the spot the Kritis *Innum Irakkam Varavillaiye* (Gundakriya) and *Kāvāi* (Nāttai) inspired by the Sannidhi of the Cosmic Dancer. "Bharati Isai Kavalār" is another title conferred by Nadakkanal. Government of India conferred a Fellowship on him.

The unique characteristic of Krishnan is his profound love of music and immense self-respect. He is 'anasūya', who does not feel jealous of others' glory and success but delights in honouring them all—a sort of *Brhmanandam* in honouring *Nadopāsakas*, roping them all to the patriotic *Cakravyūga* of Mahakavi Subramania Bharati since they all carry the title "Nadakkanal." Krishnan lives in the *manasika* world intensely conversing with Bharati and his own musical ancestors and placing his life and services at the feet of Sri Matangi Devi (Goddess of Music) and Bharati.

What is Music?

Music is an art of modulation consisting of tone and song, called music by derivation from the Muses. The Muses.....inquired into the power of songs and the modulation of the voice. The sound of these, since it is an impression upon the sense, flows by into the past and is imprinted upon the memory... Unless sounds are remembered by man, they perish, for they cannot be written down. Moses says that the inventor of the art of music was Tubal, who was of the race of Cain, before the flood. The Greeks say that Pythagoras found its beginnings in the sound of hammers and the striking of stretched strings..... without music no discipline can be perfect, for there is nothing without it. For the very universe, it is said, is held together by a certain harmony of sounds, and the heavens themselves are made to revolve by the modulation of harmony. Music moves the feelings and changes the emotions... Music also composes distraught minds, as may be read of David, who freed Saul from the unclean spirit by the art of melody. The very beasts also, even serpents, birds, and dolphins, music incites to listen to her melody. But every word we speak, every pulsation of our veins, is related by musical rhythms to the powers of harmony. (Mercury) made the lyre and transmitted it to Orpheus, who applied himself studiously to it and is deemed not merely to have swayed wild beasts with this art, but to have moved rocks and forests with the modulation of his song... But just as this ratio (6:8:12) appears in the universe from the revolution of the spheres, so in the microcosm (man) it is so inexpressibly potent that the man without its perfection and deprived of harmony does not exist.

- Lewis Rowell : Excerpt from "Paradigms for A Comparative Mythology of Music"

- Courtesy: "Music & Mythology"

BHARATA NATYAM AND ALLIED DANCES

By T. S. PARTHASARATHY

Bharata Natyam, the most popular classical Indian dance form, has received universal approbation as one of the subtlest expressions of Indian culture. Its intimate connection with the temple, as a ritualistic art, mirroring the imperceptible feelings of a devotee, reflects the inwardness of Hindu culture, says a delightfully vague blurb in a prestigious publication on Bharata Natyam, the price of which is beyond the reach of the common man. In the same publication, a Punjabi writer in his introduction claims that "it has survived for nearly 3000 years in our country, almost intact etc."

As a counterblast to this, Dr. P.S.R. Appa Rao, in his excellent monograph on Bharata's *Natya Sastra*, says, "it is obvious that Natya is exclusively drama and not dance. However, a confusion has been created in the minds of the public by the word Bharata Natyam to mean one of the classical dance forms from Tanjore. It is neither Natya nor its form has been originated by sage Bharata but only a form of dance, which is 160 years old. Hence, *Natya Sastra* should not be confused as the science of dance".

I leave it to the discerning student of Bharata Natyam to decide which of these diametrically opposite views are acceptable.

It is common knowledge that what we now call 'Bharata Natyam' was called, say 60 years ago, as Sadir, Chinna Melam, and other names. The terms Bharatam, Natyam, Adal, Kuttu, Natanam etc., were also being used in Tamil Nadu in a loose manner.

The word 'Sadir' was the term which was most commonly used. This is not a Tamil word; and in North Indian languages like Hindi, Urdu, Marathi and Bengali it means the 'highest court of law'. B.R. Rajam Iyer, in his Tamil novel *Kamalambal Charitram* calls a dance performance of his time (end of the 19th century) as 'Sadir'. Subrahmanya Bharathi, in his article on 'Abhinaya' written about 75 years ago, calls dance as 'Natyam' and Kuttu and a dancer as a 'Kuttan'. It is to be noted that he does not use the term Bharata Natyam.

In Telugu, however, the word 'Chaduru' means a 'Sabha' and a 'dance performance arranged during occasion like weddings'. It is perhaps this word used during the Nayak period that has come down to us as 'Sadir'. Kshetrajna uses the word 'Chaduru' in his Padam 'Vedukato' to mean Sabha or a court of Tirumala Nayak of Madurai.

"Bharata Natyam"

It is not as if the name 'Bharata Natyam' has not been used before this century. Purandara Dasa (1484-1564) in his song 'Adidano' (Arabhi) says that Rambha and Urvashi, the celestial dancers, danced the Bharata Natyas (*Rambheyurvasi ramani Yarellaru chandade Bharata natyagala natise*). The plural should be noted and Purandara Dasa did not certainly mean the 'Sadir' of Tanjore.

Strangely enough, an unknown commentator on the 'Bharata Senapatyam', a Tamil work on dance (not the work of the Sangam period) says that "the four Abhinayas, Angikam, Vachikam, Aharyam and Satvikam, constitute Bharata Natyam". This work was published by the Dr. Swaminatha

Iyer Library in 1943 but the author's date is not known.

Different Interpretations

Different interpretations are given for the term 'Bharata Natyam' which is claimed to be the oldest form of codified dance in the world. According to some, it means "the dance of India" (Bharata) but defined it as 'Natya in the style laid down by Bharata Muni', but several other classical dance forms of India follow the *Natya Sastra* in some way or the other. In fact, there is no Indian classical dance which can claim complete freedom from the *Natya Sastra*.

Others look askance at this definition and assert that it refers only to the dances of the courtesans of Tanjavur and had its origin in the temples and princely courts of South India. It is performed solo and consists of Nritta (pure dance) as well as Nritya (expressional dance) and its technique is largely based on the *Natya Sastra* and *Abhinaya Darpana*.

Natya connotes any one or all of the three allied performances viz., pure dance, interpretative dance and dramatic representation. The dancer acts through gestures, facial expressions and rhythmic movements. Dance speaks to us in a language parallel to that of music or poetry. Classical dance keeps time while song is sung describing a mood or a story. Concurrently, the meaning of the song appeals to the intellect, the music catches the ear and the eyes feast upon the Abhinaya.

The Natya Sastra and 'Sadir'

It would be wrong to assume that because Sadir is now called Bharata Natyam, the *Natya Sastra* of Bharata deals only with this kind of solo dance.

Bharata's classic is not merely a treatise on dance but a compendium which deals comprehensively with dramaturgy including poetics and everything connected with the stage, like its construction, make-up of artistes, acting, music etc.

In the sloka '*Munina Bharatena*' in his play '*Vikramorvasiya*', Kalidasa refers to sage Bharata not merely as an authority on the theory of Sanskrit drama but as a producer of a particular play in which was incorporated the delineation of the eight Rasas. Bharata's work remains the earliest and richest source of information on dance and matters pertaining to it. It became the standard work on dance and was followed by all subsequent writers on the subject.

Legitimate Claim

The Sadir's claim to be called Bharata Natyam is not totally illegitimate because it follows, if danced in the traditional way, many of the dance patterns described in the *Natya Sastra*. An immense variety of exquisite rhythmic patterns called Nritta, on the one hand, and highly refined and suggestively symbolic Abhinaya, on the other, distinguish Bharata Natyam from the other styles of dancing in the world. Every dance unit called Karana in Sanskrit or Adavu in Tamil is made up of a specific pose, a foot movement and a Nritta Hasta. A continuation of such units makes an Angahara (dance sequence) and a number of Angaharas constitutes a full dance. The Nritta or pure dance is "simply being beautiful to look at". Though in other dance systems also some poses and hand movements are combined, in Bharata Natya, it is combined to such a perfection as to produce an immense variety of dance patterns with beauty, hands synchronizing with poses and footwork. This is further, embellished by the addition of graceful neck and eye movements.

Present day writers on dance try to make a distinction between Adavu and Adaivu. The Tamil dictionary makes no difference between the two words. The word 'Adaivu' has no less than fourteen meanings while 'Adavu' is used only in dance. The origin of the word seems to be the Telugu word 'Adugu' or 'Aduvu', meaning 'feet'. In the dance section of Tulaja's '*Sangita Saramrita*' a number of Adavus have been described and the Sanskrit equivalent has been given as

'Kuttanam' which means the striking of the ground with the foot.

A sloka from the '*Sangita Muktavall*' makes this more clear.

"*Etani Karanan Yahuh 'adu' sabdena
laukikah*

*Nata Andhradi desasthah tauryatrika
vicakshanah*"

(These are called 'Karanas' or Adu by the people and also by the dancers of Andhra and other areas who are experts in song, dance or instrumental music).

Dance in Ancient Tamil Nadu

A brief reference may be made here to dance in ancient Tamil Nadu which was being practised by all classes of people as described in the *Tolkappiyam*, the oldest Tamil work. The kinds of dancing, Vallikuttu and Kazhanilaikkuttu are described but as we do not know their grammar we are unable to compare them with the present day dance patterns.

The *Silappadhikaram* is, however, a treasurehouse so far as dance in Tamil Nadu is concerned. Ilango Adigal refers to the dances of Siva, Murugan, Kama, Lakshmi and Indrani. Siva is said to have danced the Kodukotti and Pandarangam after his burning of the three cities (Tripuradaha). This is exactly the same dance referred to by Bharata in his *Natya Sastra* as having been performed by Siva on the same occasion.

Plethora of Literature

There is no dearth of literature on the *Natya Sastra* and subsequent works on dance like the '*Nrittaratnavali*' of Jayasenapati, but these are of use only to the scholar. When a practical dancer tries to find out which dance forms existed in the Chola period, he is referred to some inscriptions or Karana sculptures in some temples. There is hardly any reliable litera-

ture on the Sadir as it is danced today in the name of Bharata Natyam. After the decline of the Chola empire, Tamil Nadu was invaded by Malik Kafur in 1310 and there was political chaos till 1370. After the areas were retrieved by the Vijayanagar forces, the Tamil portion was being ruled by the Vijayanagar Kings till the setting up of the Nayak rule in Tanjore in 1530. No account of what was happening in the dance field during nearly two centuries is available. Some details are available only from the reign of Raghunatha Nayak (1614-1635) and Vijayaraghava Nayak (1635-1673) from the Telugu literature written at the time. Not only the music but dance was also called as 'Karnatakamu'. A complete picture of Sangita, Sahitya and Natya prevalent in the court of the last two Nayaks is to be found in the '*Rajagopala Vilasam*', a fine Telugu work by Chengalva Kalakavi.

A large number of dances prevalent at the time is found in Telugu works and these include, Allika, Chaupada, Dandaiasyakam, Darupadam, Desi, Gujjari, Jakkini, Perani, Sabdam, Kuravanji etc. The names of a number of Rajadasis who had specialized in particular types of dance are given, such as Rupavati for Chaupada, Champakavalli for Sabadachintamani, Murti for Jakkini, Komalavalli for Kovai, Bhagirati for Perani and so on. These names would indicate that they were Devadasis of Tamil origin. Recently a well-known dancer of Andhra Pradesh had done research on these dance forms.

Dance in Serfoji's Time

In 1959 the Sarasvati Mahal Library, Tanjore, published a book *Korvyache Sahityache Jinnas* containing dance compositions in Marathi by Raja Serfoji which came as an eye-opener to many. Each Nirupana in this collection contains 18 compositions set in the same Raga and the order followed by the ruler shows that

all the 18 items were being performed in his time. Only a few of them viz., Sabdam, Varnam, Padam, Kavutthuvam and Tillana have survived in the present day Bharata Natyam. One or two of the forms are danced in the Bhagavata Mela tradition. The word 'Jakkini' is stated to be associated with Persia but strangely enough it is found in the 'Koyil Olugu', a history of the Srirangam temple. The composition called 'Servai' (perhaps Sevai) is none other than our Alarippu but the other forms have been unearthed by Acharya Parvatikumar of Bombay. Some of the dance forms of the Nayak period seem to have gone out of vogue during the Maratha period and some more added.

The Tanjore Quartette

The advent of the Tanjore Quartette, Chinnaiah, Ponnaiah, Sivanandam and Vadivelu marks a new era in the history of Bharata Natyam as it led to the introduction of the present pattern of a recital viz., Alarippu, Jatisvaram, Sabdam, Pada-Varnam, Padam, Ragamalika and Tillana. At the time of Serfoji's death in 1832, Chinnaiah, the eldest among the Quartette, was 32 and Vadivelu, the youngest was 21. Originally they were Oduvars of Tamil origin and were brought into Tanjore to recite Tevaram and do Nattuvangam at the Big Temple there. They learnt music from Muthuswami Dikshitar and also became proficient in Telugu and Sanskrit to the extent of writing compositions in those languages in addition to Tamil. They served Sivaji (1833-1855), the successor of Serfoji, for a longer period and composed songs in his praise. The most gifted and versatile among the brothers was Vadivelu who migrated to Trivandrum to become the Asthana Vidvan of Svati Tirunal. He died there in 1847, the year in which Tyagaraja and Svati Tirunal also passed away. The other three too were patronized by Svati

Tirunal and the ruler of Mysore and wrote compositions in their praise.

Quartette Repertoire

The compositions of the Quartette form the backbone of the Bharata Natyam performances of to-day but the editions of these songs need complete revision from the chronological point of view. Much of what they popularized must have been handed down to them by their forebears who belonged to the time of ruler Tulaja or even before. The Prabandhas of Vekatamakhi and Ramaswami Dikshitar, the Varnams of Svati Tirunal and a Suladi have been printed without disclosing the names of the composers.

The Navasandhi Kavutthuvams and the Pancha murti Kavutthuvams have been copied from the 'Natanadi Vadya Ranjanam' written by one Gangaimuttu Nattuvanar of Tirunelveli and published with the help of Ambalavana Navalur. This work also contains Kavutthuvams on Kali of Tiruvalangadu, Vishnu of Tiruchengodu, Andal of Srivilliputtur, Chokkanathar of Madurai and Mahalinga of Darukavanam. Also four Telugu Sabdams composed by Melattur Kasinathayya and dedicated to ruler Pratapa Simha (1714-1764) of Tanjore. These include the Manduka Sabdam which is very popular in Kuchipudi dance recitals.

The present Dance 'Margam'

The present Alarippu-Tillana arrangement of our Bharata Natyam recitals is the most logical and also follows texts like the *Sangita Muktavali*. The Alarippu is a pure nritta item found in many forms of dance as an invocation dance and is known by different names like Pushpanjali. This may be compared to a warming up item like the Tana Varna in a music concert. This is followed by the Jatisvaram which is again another Nritta item performed with simple Adavu patterns. The Sabdam is the first

item performed with Abhinaya. This was called Yasogiti formerly. It invariably consists of four lines of literature and is commenced with Kambhoji in Misra Chapu Tala.

The Varna is the *piece-de-resistance* in a modern Bharata Natya recital requiring skill in Abhinaya, Tala and the execution of intricate Adavu Jatis. Pada Varnams are compositions in Sringara Rasa, in praise of a deity, king or patron and contain a Pallavi, Anupallavi, Chittasvara, Charanam, Svara and Svarasahitya. Abhinaya performed to the singing of Pallavi, Anupallavi and Sahitya of the Chittasvaras is alternated with increasingly complex accelerated Jatis, Tirmanams and Adavus. Similarly for the Charanas, Svaras and Svara Sahityas.

The Padam

The 'Padam' is a unique type of composition which plays an important role in the present-day Bharata Natyam recitals. The *Natya Sastra* of Bharata mentions the Padam as an indispensable constituent of the Gandharva, Bharata has used the word 'Padam' in the sense of Sahitya of songs to be used in a drama for Abhinaya. The characteristics of a Padam are that it is intended for Nritya or dance with gesticulations. A Padam should be full of Bhava or emotional appeal and the motif is gradually expanded in the Charana culminating in a climax in the last Charana.

Kalidasa and Jayadeva have used the term 'Padam' in different contexts. But the fact that Jayadeva's Ashtapadi-s were being employed for Abhinaya in dance recitals is clear from the work '*Pada Abhinaya manjari*' written by Vasudeva Vachasundra of the North in which Abhinaya has been indicated from each word of the Sahitya in the Bharata Natyam style. This work has been published by the Sarasvati Mahal Library.

Today, the Padam is a well-defined composition, known for its slow tempo, saturation with the Sringara Rasa and Nayaka-Nayika Bhava as its motif. The composers have drawn their inspiration from poetic works like the '*Sringara Tilaka*', the '*Amaru Sataka*', the '*Rasamanjari*' of Bhanudatta and '*Sringara manjari*' of Saint Akbar Shah. In a Telugu work called '*Sringara Rasa Manjari*' by an unknown author, the Padams of Kshetrajna are cited as examples for describing Nayaka-Nayika Bhedas.

The Padam plays an important role in the present day Bharata Natyam recitals and is the mainstay for the Abhinaya part of the programme. Only mature artistes can do justice to Padams and it is idle to expect very young girls to depict the emotions, however well they are trained.

The present day recitals are concluded with Javalis and Tillanas but the latter is more important from the dance point of view as it is full of Sollukattus and adds tempo to the concluding part of the performance. Occasionally, a short Charana in praise of a god or a king is added at the end. Tillanas are older than Javalis.

The Bhagavata Mela Nataka

Before concluding mention should be made about two allied dance forms of South India which are as old as the Bharata Natyam if not older than the Sadir. The first of these is the Bhagavata Mela Nataka, the main centre of which is Melattur. The art was also being practised at Sulamanagalam, Saliangalam, Utukadu, Nallur and Tepperumanallur, all in the Tanjore District of Tamil Nadu.

During the reign of the Nayak rulers of Tanjore, several villages were donated to Brahmins who were experts in dance. A number of such families appeared to have migrated from the Kuchipudi area in Andhra Pradesh and settled down in these villages

to establish the Bhagavata Mela tradition on the model of the Kuchipudi dance tradition. The earliest to arrive was Narayana Tirtha, a Sanyasin of Advaitic persuasion, who wrote the 'Krishna Lila Tarangini' on the model of the 'Gita Govinda' and also established a Bhajana tradition at Varahur.

The Bhagavata Mela tradition is closer to Uparupaka concept than the solo Bharata Natyam as the former is Natya in its real meaning. A number of dance dramas were written in Telugu and danced during temple festivals entirely by the males of the villages concerned. The main playwright was Melattur Venkatarama Sastri, who was a senior contemporary of Tyagaraja, and he wrote about a dozen such dramas some of which are presented even today.

The three aspects of the histrionic art viz., Nritta, Nritya and Natya find full scope in these dramas. The footwork, the movements of the body, Adavujatis and Tirmanams closely follow the accepted conventions. The present exponents of this art are all amateurs engaged in different vocations but they assemble at Melattur every year and perform the dramas during festivals. The music is purely Karnatak classical. Unless immediate steps are taken to resuscitate this dance form and make it presentable in cities, it might become a matter of the past in the coming years.

The Kuravanjis

The second type of dance-drama is the Kuravanji (literally meaning a "Kuratti") which is another product of the Tamil soil. These dance-dramas were originally being performed in temples by female dancers and the technique employed was that of the classical Sadir Nautch. Tanjore again became the centre of this tradition with

hundreds of Devadasis being attached to the Brihadeesvara temple.

The *Tyagesar Kuravanji*, by an unknown author, which used to be performed at the Tyagaraja temple at Tiruvarur during the time of Shahaji (1684-1710) was the most famous of the Kuravanjis. Later, nearly a dozen such works came to be written in Tamil on several deities and patrons like Sarabhoji and these offer excellent material for enacting dance dramas by competent dancers. The Chitrakavya variety of the Uparupaka can be seen in Kuravanji dance-dramas which give plenty of scope for Vipralambha Sringara, the Sakhi playing an important role as the Nayika's messenger. The central character in Kuravanjis is however the Kuratti, the gypsy fortuneteller and special folk tunes and dances are employed for her part. Otherwise, the music is purely Karnatak.

Dance Explosion

During the past three decades there has been, in the dance field, a proliferation which may be called an explosion. Dozens of dance schools have come into existence and hundreds of girls are practising Bharata Natyam today as a supplementary qualification. This has come in for caustic criticism from some quarters but the onward march of the art cannot be arrested by such prophets of doom. The revival of interest in this prestigious art form of Tamil Nadu has done the art a lot of good. Dozens of dance compositions have been unearthed, published and choreographed. Modern techniques are being adopted for costumes, stage decor, lighting and publicity. The printed programmes and brochures greatly enlighten the average viewer and enable him or her to appreciate the art better than ever before.

Bharata Natyam is on the march, sensitive to all the winds that blow in the

sphere of world dance and reacting to exotic influences with some side of its genius. Who knows? The future is perhaps going to be the golden age in its long and colourful history.

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Enriching the Raga Repertoire of Hindustani Music*

By Sakuntala Narasimhan

In the last few decades, and especially since Independence, interaction between the Hindustani and Karnatak systems of classical music has been significant, compared to the earlier period. As part of this process, a number of Ragas have been borrowed from one system and adopted (and adapted) by the other. This paper looks specifically at some of those Ragas of the Karnatak system which have been incorporated into the Hindustani system and examines them with a view to identifying structural norms, if any, that the Hindustani system follows in choosing Ragas for adoption.

The following list of 12 Ragas was drawn up, on the basis of their being chosen for delineation by Hindustani musicians. This list forms the basis for this paper's analysis. [Obviously, therefore, those identical pairs of Ragas that already exists in the two systems (with, or without,

the same names) are not being taken into account, - like Kalyani-Eman, or Bhairav-Mayamalavagoula, etc.

In listing the notes of each Raga, the nomenclature can sometimes be misleading and confusing, because the convention of naming the Swaras in the north and south are not the same. For example, the Suddha Gandhara of Hindustani music is not the same as the Suddha Gandhara of Karnatak music; Suddha in the Hindustani convention refers to those notes taken by Bilawai Thaata, while in the Karnatak tradition, Suddha notes are the lower [flat] varieties of each Swara. For the sake of convenience, therefore, and to avoid confusion, the notes are denoted by R1, R2, G1, G2 etc., to signify the lower and higher variety of Rishabha, Gandhara etc., respectively.

List of Karnatak Ragas borrowed by Hindustani classical music :

No.	RAGA	NOTES	MELA No.	REMARKS
1.	Hamsadhvani	R ₂ G ₂ P N ₂	29 Janya	R Nyasa Swara
2.	Saraswati	R ₂ M ₂ P D ₂	64 Janya	R, M are Raga Chaya & Nyasa Swaras.
3.	Charukesi	R ₂ G ₂ M ₁ P D ₁ N ₁	26	R Nyasa
4.	Narayani	R ₂ M ₁ P D ₂ (N ₁)	28 Janya	R Nyasa
5.	Kiravani	R ₂ G ₁ M ₁ P D ₁ N ₂	21	R Nyasa
6.	Abhogi	R ₂ G ₁ M ₁ D ₂	22 Janya	R Nyasa
7.	Simhendra madhyamam	R ₂ G ₁ M ₂ P D ₁ N ₂	57	R Nyasa
8.	Janasammodini	R ₂ G ₂ P D ₂ N ₁	28 Janya	G Amsa Swara
9.	Vachaspati	R ₂ G ₂ M ₂ P D ₂ N ₁	64	R Nyasa
10.	Nagaswarali	G ₂ M ₁ P D ₂	28 Janya	G Amsa Swara, Evening
11.	Shanmukhapriya	R ₂ G ₁ M ₂ P D ₁ N ₁	56	R Nyasa
12.	Malayamarutam	R ₁ G ₂ P D ₂ N ₁	16 Janya	

* Being a paper presented at the National Seminar on "Music Research-Perspectives and Prospects", convened by Indian Musicological Society in Dec, 1991, Bombay, in collaboration with Dept of Music, University of Bombay.

Note : R2 denotes Suddha Rishabha of Hindustani system, G1 the Komal Gandhar, M2 Tivra Madhyam, D2 Suddha Dhaivat and N1 Komal Nishad. The Mela numbers in column 3 refer to the number of the Scale in the Karnatak scheme of 72 Melakarta Ragas (called Janaka Ragas, from which Janya Ragas are derived, as in the case of Thaats) The (N) in Narayani Raga refers to the use of Nishadha only in the Avaroha.

From an examination of this list, the following observations can be made, regarding the structure of the Ragas:

1. Five out of the 12 are Mela [Sampoorna] scales.
2. Three are Shadava Ragas. (Six notes)
3. Four are Audava (five note) scales:
4. Five use Suddha Madhyama, while four take the Tivra Madhyam.
5. Four take Komal Gandhar (G1), five take Suddha Gandhar (G2);
6. Four take Komal Dhaivat, and 7 take Suddha Dhaivat (D2);
7. Six Ragas take Komal Nishad (N1), while 3 take N2.
8. Except Malayamarutam, all the Ragas take R2 [Suddha Rishabh of Hindustani system]
9. Most of the Ragas are Rishabha Nyasa scales.
10. Ten are considered evening Ragas, one morning (Malayamarutam) and one is sometimes used as a morning Raga and sometimes evening (Charukesi).

Now, is there a discernible pattern in the structures of these Karnatak Ragas adopted by the Hindustani system? Are there some common features identifiable in these 12 scales that have been accepted and popularised by the Hindustani tradition?

If we examine the Aroha- Avaroha for symmetry there does not seem to be any correlation, because no discernible symmetry is seen.

The Karnatak system of Ragas is based on a comprehensive and exhaustive framework, of Melakarta (Janaka) Ragas, 72 altogether (like Thaats of Hindustani music), from which all possible combinations of Shadava, Audava and Vakra scales are derived. Every conceivable Raga can be fitted under one Mela or the other, depending on the notes taken. In theory, therefore, the possibilities of borrowing from Karnatak music lie in all the 72 parent Ragas.

These 72 Mela Ragas are grouped under 12 Chakras. A Chakra is a set of six Ragas, all Sampurna by definition, of course. The six Ragas in one Chakra all have one particular combination of Rishabha, Gandhara-that is, the first Chakra has R1, combined with one variety of Gandhara, etc. The Madhyama is Suddha (the flat variety) for all the first 36 Mela Ragas, while the second set of 36 remaining Mela Ragas are the exact images of the previous 36, except for the Madhyama which is Tivra (or Prati Madhyama, the sharp variety.). Thus, Melas one and 37 will be identical except for Madhyama, and so on. Within each Chakra, the Purvanga notes (R, G, and M) remaining invariant, the Uttaranga notes (D and N) take different combinations (D1 with N1, D1 with N2, and so on) to give the notes of the different Mela Ragas.

Examining the list from this point, one sees that only Ragas from the third, fourth and fifth, and tenth, eleventh Chakras figure in the Ragas borrowed by the Hindustani System. The maximum number (five) are from the fifth Chakra, (in which Sankarabharanam, equivalent to the North Indian Bilawal Thaats falls), while 2 each are from the fourth, tenth and eleventh Chakras. There are no Ragas borrowed from the first, sixth, seventh or twelfth Chakras, and none from the first or sixth Ragas of any Chakra. These Scales are

known as Vivadi Melas in the South because they use two varieties of the same note one after the other-i.e., R1 and R2, as in the Karnatak raga Kanakangi, or G1 and G2 as in Nattai of the Karnatak system.

This is interesting because Hindustani music does not avoid these Vivadi combinations in its indigenous scales, and plenty of examples can be found of Ragas using two adjacent varieties of the same note-Lalit [two Madhyams] and Jog [two Gandhars], for instance. So one wonders why none of the South Indian Vivadi scales feature among the ragas borrowed by the Hindustani system. [One reason could be that these Vivadi scales are themselves controversial, even in the South-but this cannot be a valid explanation, for two reasons. One is that Ragas like Jog/Nattai are popular both in the North and in the South, and the other is that Hindustani music does use adjacent notes, as mentioned above].

We also notice that apart from Narayani, all the Ragas borrowed have Aroha and Avaroha using the same notes. For this also, an adequate explanation is not identifiable because Hindustani music uses a number of Ragas with Avarohas different from Aroha e.g., Madhuvantil, Multani, etc. So what are the criteria that Hindustani musicians adopt, in choosing Karnatak Ragas? What stops them from borrowing other Ragas too, from the

hundreds of possibilities that the Mela-Janya system includes?

Examining the list from the point of view of Gamakas, again, one finds that it is not the preponderance of Karnatak Gamakas that inhibit Hindustani music from adopting a scale, because a Raga like Kiravani, which features a Nishadha with a typical Karnatak Gamaka (Andolita) has been readily incorporated into the North Indian system, with the use of a different kind of Gamaka (straight Nishadha), resulting in a change in the Raga swarupa. Shanmukhapriya, likewise, has a completely altered Swarupa in the Hindustani style, compared to the parent Karnatak Raga, although the notes remain the same.

Similarly, none of the Karnatak Ragas using Vakra Prayogas have so far been adopted by the North. This, again, is not because the Hindustani system does not include Vakra ragas; it does, and in plenty in fact. The Kanada varieties with the 'GMRS' phrase, and Gaud Sarang, are obvious examples that come to mind.

The conclusion that one can draw is that the deciding factor seems to be largely subjective norms, of what is considered aesthetically pleasing and acceptable, from the Hindustani musician's perspective. Otherwise, there is no reason why several other Karnatak ragas too should not be incorporated into the Hindustani system.

Courtesy : "Music Research - Perspectives and Prospects"



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OUR HONORARY HONOURED



SEMMANGUDI HONOURING SESHADRI

SHANMUKHA takes pride and pleasure in reporting that two of its pillars Shri S. Seshadri, Hon. Secretary of the Sabha, Publisher SHANMUKHA and Shri K. S. Mahadevan, Founder-Editor and at present Member, Editorial Advisory Board, SHANMUKHA, were honoured with accolades for their outstanding services in the cause of Music and Fine Arts at two functions held recently at Madras, the citadel of our arts and culture.

Inaugurating the 4-day Music Festival (Sept.95) organised by the Maharajapuram Viswanatha Iyer Trust, in connection with the birth-centenary of the 'Sangeetha Bhoopathy', the Bhishma Pitha of Karnatak Music, Shri Semmangudi Srinivasier observed, that those involved in the administration of cultural organisations were rarely considered worthy of public recognition. He congratulated the Trust for its innovative decision to honour the Hon.

Secretaries of the Sabhas, which besides promoting Classical music played a significant role in scouting and promoting cultural talents and introducing them suitably to the Rasikas. Shri Seshadri was felicitated with a Ponnadai, an Angavastram, a Silver Medal and a Memento. Other Secretaries felicitated were S/Shri Yagnaraman (Krishna Gana Sabha), Ramachandran (Indian Fine Arts) and Parthasarathy (Tyaga Brahma Gana Sabha) of Madras.

In his characteristic reply of thanks Sri Seshadri, after paying his respects to Maharajapuram Viswanatha Iyer, nostalgically referred to his childhood days spent in the company the maestro's two sons at Kumbakonam, the temple town of Tamil Nadu, where music and dance environ was all pervading and which influenced and drew him to the beauties of Karnatak music and other fine arts. He stressed that the

honour done to him was in fact an honour done to the Sabha, his colleagues in the Management, the 5000 members and also to his family members who stood by him all through in his pursuit of service to fine arts, spanning more than five decades.

One of the founding fathers of our Sabha (1952) which today occupies a premier position as a monument of National Integration and Cultural Synthesis, Sri Seshadri has had an uninterrupted tenure all these years as an office-bearer of the Sabha and happily continues to be associated at present with the activities of Sabha including the reconstruction of the Sabha's Hall.

Appointed by the Maharashtra Government as a SEM in 1989, Sri Seshadri's other pursuits include associating with Sri Vedanta Desika Sampradaya Sabha, the Balaji Bhakta Darshan Sabha and fund raising for the religious activities of the Ahobila Mutt. He has also been 'lionised'

by the Lions Club of Malabar Hill for a Special honour in recognition of his Service to performing arts.

Shri K.S. Mahadevan was honoured with the title of Bharata Vimarshaka Bhushana by Shree Bharatalaya, Madras, in July last, during the institution's Silver Jubilee Celebration.

A doyen among Cultural Columnists Shri Mahadevan was for several years Music Critic of *INDIAN EXPRESS*, Bombay, and continues to be so for the Madras Edition at present.

SHANMUKHA is what it is today because of the strong foundations laid by Shri Mahadevan.

SHANMUKHA wishes both these Stalwarts many more years of useful and purposeful life in the pursuit of service to fine arts.

- Editor

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KHARAHARAPRIYA

By S.R. JANAKIRAMAN

It will do well to remember that a Raga is spoken of as Janya only for purposes of classification and it is in no sense indicative of its later birth. The offspring before the parent as if the child is the father of man is a common phenomenon in the history of Ragas of our Music. Some Janya Ragas are much older than their parent modes. The genus-species system was an advent of the 14th century A.D. Only then some fifteen Melas and the fifty Janyas thereof were mentioned in Vidyaranya's *Sangeetha Sara* (1320-1380 A.D.). Melas have stood for generic scales. Most of the Melas of those times derived their names only from old and the well known Ragas spoken of as Janyas thereof. Sriraga is an instance of such a Mela.

'Child is Father of Man'

One of the Janyas of Kharaharapriya is the most popular Sriraga. Sriraga is of great antiquity. It has been described by almost all the text book writers on music of the medieval and modern periods of musical history. Sriraga has been mentioned in the works like *Sangeetha Makaranda* of Narada (7-9th centuries A.D.), *Sangeetha Samayasara* of Parsvadeva (12th century A.D.) and *Sangeetha Ratnakara* of Sarngadeva (1203-1247 A.D.) The name of Kharaharapriya as such is not of any old origin. The name Kharaharapriya is perhaps found for the first time in the works *Sangeetha Sarasangrahamu* and *Sangrahachudamani*, both placed in the latter part of the 18th century A.D. For this matter, the scale of Kharaharapriya is not of any recent origin. The scale whether it was required to be full or otherwise either in the ascent or in the descent, existed in the form of Sriraga. In a sense the histories of Sriraga

and Kharaharapriya have got mixed up with each other. The history of one is itself the history of the other.

The meaning hidden behind the name Kharaharapriya could be derived as follows: The letters 'Kha', 'Ra' contribute perhaps no meaning to the name. These letters have been placed as prefix only to serve the rule of Katapayadi computation to derive the required 22, being the rank of the Mela Kharaharapriya in the scheme of 72 Melas. All this is later event and advent. Harapriya is highly meaningful. Hara means Siva. Hence, Harapriya is that which pleases Siva.

It is proclaimed in our sacred lore that Sama Veda pleases Siva most. That is why, when the great Siva Bhakta Ravana was pressed under Mount Kailas when he wanted to lift it, he created the instrument Ravanastra by chopping one of his heads and hands combining them both and played the Saman chant, which immediately appeased Siva. Ravana was released forthwith. In the Kriti of Tyagaraja beginning with the words *Nadatanumanisam*, we find a reference to the Sapta Swaras Sa, Ri, Ga, Ma, Pa, Dha, Ni, being born of the five faces of Siva, namely, Sadyojata, Isana, Vamadeva, Tatpurusha and Aghora.

Primordial Scale

Brahma derived music from Sama Veda, proclaim all the text book writers on music - '*Samabhyogitamevacha*', '*Samavedadidam gitam Sanjagraha Pitamaha*' are the common references. These references have got their full significance. Music was in the stage of "Saminogayanthi" in the Yajurveda while it employed the full complemented scale-the seven noted scale-in Samagana.

Samagana is the earliest piece of hymnal music. It is this Saman chant that formed as it were the grounds for the evolution of what is known as Shadjagrama, the primordial scale of the Hindus and Hindu music.

Shadjagrama was the first and the foremost classic Suddha Swara Saptaka. The scale of Shadjagrama as defined by our Lakshanakaras brings it very near the rendering of the notes of Bhairavi. The notes Ri, Ga, Dha and Ni of the scale of Saman chant or the Shadjagrama as the case may be are diminished by just a comma as against the well asserted notes Chatursruti Ri, Sadharana Ga, Chatursruti Dha and Kalsiki Ni. It is noteworthy to find that certain Ragas like Sriraga, Mukhari, Anandabhariavi which stand in between Bhairavi and Kharaharapriya class are appropriately designated as Shadjagrama inasmuch as a few phases of the said Ragas are traceable in the Saman Chant.

It could easily be apprehended that though the Swarasthanas of the ascent of Bhairavi and Kharaharapriya are identical in terminology, they are wide apart in actual manipulation. It is the subtly and delicately manipulated notes as they are rendered in Bhairavi in its ascent are the notes that constitute the Shadjagrama, the same notes spoken in terms of Swarasthana correspond to the scale of Kharaharapriya.

A rational interpretation could be attempted for the evolution of the scale of Kharaharapriya. The application of a Chatursruti interval to the well asserted notes of Sa, Ma and Pa brings to light certain notes. The composition of these notes into a scale brings it midway between ascent of Bhairavi and the actual Kharaharapriya. If the Ri and Dha, are diminished by a interval of a Pramana Sruti, it is the scale of Shadjagrama while if, on the other hand, the Ga and Ni are augmented by an interval of the same

Pramana Sruti the scale is that of Kharaharapriya.

Before the advent of the scheme of 72 Melakartas as the idea of Raga was fast evolving and as the detail relating to its individual came to be studied with greater accuracy, the necessity for classifying with reference to some generic scales came to be felt. This feeling of such a necessity paved the way for the theorists propounding the Melapaddhati. Still till at least the 18th century, a Mela was understood to be a scale wherein all the seven notes occurred either in the Arohana or Avarohana or both taken together. That the Arohana and Avarohana should individually be Sampurna and also regular was not insisted. Some of the pre-eminent Ragas prior to 18th or 19th centuries were all the way elevated to the status of Melas for no reason whatsoever and the rest having the same Swaras in common were spoken of as Janyas thereof. This is how Sriraga became a Mela first. but after the advent of the Kanakangi-Ratnangi nomenclature, Sriraga and Kharaharapriya exchanged places.

Kharaharapriya though the name has been a new coinage in the Kanakangi nomenclature and designated as the 22nd Mela has existed ever since the conception of our age-old Suddha scale with only the Ga and Ni to be sharpened as explained above.

Kharaharapriya got its fresh lease of life at the hands of Tyagaraja. The entire credit goes to him for having established first the melodic worth and individuality of Bhairavi and Kharaharapriya so distinctly through his masterly creations in these Ragas.

Courtesy: "Souvenir of Music Academy"

Talent Exp(1)osure

There is an Explosion of young talent in Karnatak music but it suffers, either because there is no proper training to shape it on right lines or the young musicians are too conceited to develop their talents further.' This seems to be the refrain the stalwart - maestros and veteran - teachers 'sing' year after year when they meet at informal gatherings or in a formal Seminar.

A connoisseur doubts 'whether the large number of entrants into the field of Karnatak music augurs for real improvement of standards of the art'. Unfortunately, he laments, 'the craze for publicity.... has taken firm roots in the hearts of our young musicians. The easy acceptance of their accomplishments paves the way for greater activity in the direction of seeking greater recognition. Criticism rarely seems to chasten their urge for success with the result equipoise and sense of values abandon them.... They involve themselves in rendering the art with no more aim than that of titillating the nerves of sensation - seeking crowds....' Green pastures abroad and increased opportunities only whet their appetite for applause and accolade. They go on a performing spree hardly pausing to learn and practice, leave alone 'listen'.

It is true that youth interest and promotion in classical music have been of late growing, thanks to the wider range of exposure at their disposal. For instance, organisations like SPIC-MACAY are doing yeoman service towards music education to rear informed Rasikas while Talent Promotion Programmes organised by many music institutions and Sabhas give youngsters an exposure on the concert forum.

It is also true that more and more talents are coming on to the fora with one foot on their 'bread-winning' profession and the other in the hobby of performing arts. They work hard enough on both fronts to keep a working balance. Besides, the boost the corporate houses give for promoting such talents is not insignificant. They extend all facilities to honing the talents on professional level and help them undergo a quasi-Gurukul training under great masters. Going by the statistics of the past 5-6 years one may say with certain confidence that among the performing youth, quite a sizeable number have emerged from a musical Parampara and they are likely to preserve and enrich their legacy, if their performances are any indication.

However there are others, not excluding the scions of established houses, who have had premature exposure, left with little time to lean and develop their individuality. More often than not they seem to settle down to a 'patterned music' where intellectual display of skills and concert craft take precedence over soulful rendition of music.

It is not without reason that a veteran once retorted, "have the youngsters cultivated listening habits? Is not 'Kezhvi Gnanam' indispensable for learning music? How many attend the concerts, be it of elders or their own age-group?" True, listeners for music concerts today comprise mostly middle-aged and old people.

One cannot blame the veterans if they felt that the youngsters are taking it easy as many, banking on their intelligence and skill, sing from the text. One wonders how many of them would have listened to D.K. Pattammal's advice that one should not sing a song in public unless it is well -

polished and that she herself would never render a composition in a concert unless she had practised it thoroughly for a number of times and acquired a feel for it! Those were the days when oral tradition was prevalent and teaching through notation had not come into vogue. Today youngsters even risk copying a 'Cassette Guru' with the script in hand!

Flair for the rare has also contributed towards youngsters' flight from the time-honoured modes. In this the share of blame of the elder performers cannot be altogether ruled out. The last couple of years have seen many rare melodies emerging on the scene and capturing the young and old. Kalyanavasantam and Karnaranjani, Hamsavinodini and Swarasammodhini, Niroshtha and Urmika and the like have swarmed the scene. Not that it was not the case in early decades of the century. In fact, the Music Trinity especially Saint Tyagaraja had given 'life' to many Apoorva Ragas through his compositions. But performers used them as 'spices' and not as the staple of the concerts.

The electronic revolution has had its own influence on the youth. Cassettes, Disc-culture is on the rise. Many prepare a 'fast - concert menu' from these sources. All these cause a concern for the future.

What steps to stem this decline?

(i) A purposeful promotion of listening is the prime need of the hour. Youngsters should be made to attend the concerts of

the stalwarts of the day as well as listen to the recordings of those of yesteryears. Attending seminars and lecture - demonstration should also be made a habit.

(ii) The dictum that "music is an experience and not an entertainment", should be dinned into their minds. They should supplement their listening with disciplined Sadhaka, for classical music itself is "a discipline and it can thrive only in an environment of discipline". Vyavahara should be curbed to the minimum and Manodharma given a reticent flow. Similarly 'imitation' should be kept at low and individuality evolved.

(iii) Those aspiring to be in the field and reach the top have to train intensively under a renowned teacher and at one time or the other of their career decide where their goal is set - Music or other profession.

(iv) Elder - performers too have a duty towards the younger generation. They should strive to be role-models for the youngsters and make their concert 'a musical experience' and not playing to the gallery!

To quote a connoisseur. "We would wait with prolonged patience for the time when artistes will understand the main purpose of a Concert as not for intellectual display alone but for the life-giving music it engenders."

-R. Saroja



"Jaya Jaya Devi" - A Dance of Melody

Call it a 'Dance of Melody' or an operatic dance, it has norms of its own to make a wholesome Visual art. The blend of melody and mime, the fusion of laya in melody and movements, particularly in classical Nritha intricacies it goes to make are all the outcome of great imagination and coordination. It has involved two individuals of imagination and innovation, one in composing the opera and the other in choreographing the visual. The impact of the production naturally rises in stature and substance.

Jaya Jaya Devi, presented by the Fine Arts Society, Chembur (Sponsored by *Times of India Group*) at the Nehru Centre on September 22, 1995 was a feast for the ears and eyes. Conceived and composed by none other than the Violin Virtuoso, Lalgudi G. Jayaraman, *Jaya Jaya Devi*, depict Devi Shakti in seven manifestations, such as Dakshayani, Uma, Ardhanari, Durga, Karumari, Parvathi etc.. Known for his characteristic fusion of Layam, Nayam and Sunadam it did not come as a surprise when Lalgudi extended his creative sensitivity to dance sector. As he himself confessed the "Dance of Sound" that he named his record of Tillanas twenty five years' back certainly was an inspiration. The lyrics have a softness as his music a suave Nayam, and are simple, brimming with musical lilt. Musical setting has built-in dance lilt.

One has only to recall his 'Sangathi' improvisations in his concerts as a testimony to this. And an adept in all Indian Ragas, Karnatak and Hindustani, he has drawn liberally from both making a garland of melodic hues and shades with an emphasis on the right Bhava, Rasa. The musician in Lalgudi has played a dominant role in the 'Opera' in that he has brought in the variegated shades and modes that

could emanate from the Ragas, and the vast scope they open up for improvisation.

The dance choreography has been entrusted to Ms. Rhadha, a scion of Vazhavoora Ramiah Pillai, sister of Kamala and herself a dancer of eminence who earlier established her choreographic skill in making dance drama of Tyagaraja's *Nauka Charithram*. What a coincidence that the opera *Jaya Jaya Devi* she choreographed into a Dance Drama has been composed by one belonging to the Saint's Sishya Parampara!). The dance pure dance passages, she has woven into the Swara sequences and the Abhinaya for expressional facet sexude elegance and softness and subtlety. Avoiding theatricality in portrayal she lets the drama flow with succinct evocations. And respecting the composer's instinct for the production, Rhadha has moulded the dance, nritha intricacies including, to the flow of music. A great achievement on her part. Her conducting of the show with fine musicians at her command added dignity and excellence to the production.

It is no exaggeration to say that it is Ramh, the lead musician, who carried the day with his deep, resonant voice that could emote any Bhava and rise to any Rasa. His modulations, his fine Uchcharan and his musical eloquence could articulate any musical twists or Sruti Bheda his Guru Lalgudi designed in the musical fabric.

The production, overall had all elements of a dance drama. Moving with times the maestro had employed Vachikabhinaya with a difference. The Suthradhari or Kattiyakkaran here made his introduction of the Scene, the Patra, and the theme in lucid English!

The dance-drama, it should be recalled was originally composed for the audience

in the U.S.A.. The innovation was not intruding for the narration by P.C. Rama krishna, a theatre personality, interspersed with relevant Sanskrit passages, had its own impact.

About the episodes and dancers there was an uninterrupted flow as the powerful wings carried the show with great efficiency. Though overall eye-filling, certain inadequacies could have been attended to especially the cast of Shiva. He could not rise up to the exacting standards that the role of cosmic dancer requires. Again Bharata Muni was not convincing.

It was Bringi who stole the thunder in the Ardhanari episode. The episode was one of the best depicted imaginatively and effectively choreographed.

It is in this episode that the title of the production emanated. Bringi's 'undaunted' Shiva Bhakti to the negligence of Shakti, the trials and tribulations he is subjected to, his ultimate defeat and final acceptance

of 'Ardhanari', the Shiva-Shakti concept, was an excellent portrayal.

So was "Durga" where, in the Devi - Mahishasura confrontations, Lalgudi has woven Sindhu Bhairavi in Sruti Bheda variations creating a musical illusion. Rhadha's dance choreography synchronised creating a sense of awe and admiration. The finale Arathi, *Om Jaya Jagadeeshwari* to depict the victory of Shakti was typical of the convention prevailing in the north. The artistes in general acquitted themselves with precision and competence. Synchrony was their hallmark.

It was a Lalgudi family effort, one learnt, as his daughter Vijayalakshmi and daughter-in-law Lalitha gave brilliant vocal support to Ramh. The orchestra was effective too.

-Kinnari

SHANMUKHA WISHES

A THE READERS

A Very Happy Navarathri

&

Deepavali

A SILVER JUBILEE SADHANA

Twentyfive years of a fruitful existence of any institution of fine arts is by no means a small achievement. Shree Bharathalaya, a pre-eminent institution of Madras providing training in Bharathanatyam, Karnatak music, Sanskrit etc., had its modest beginning in 1970, with Padmashri Dr. Sudharani Raghupathy as its President and Padmashri Vidwan Madurai N. Krishnan as its Director and a few other art connoisseurs as its working committee members. During the span of twentyfive years, it has grown and developed into a dance institution of great eminence widely known both in India and abroad. This dance academy, located in Luz Church Road, Mylapore, a vantage locality of Madras, in commemoration of the completion of twentyfive years of its art and cultural activities, celebrated its Silver Jubilee function at Narada Gana Sabha, Madras for three days on 27th, 28th and 29th July, '95.

Grandeur, gaiety and resplendence were the hallmarks of this three-day glittering ceremony, the like of which the art lovers of Madras have not seen in the recent past. Shree Bharathalaya has established its distinct stamp for its quality of dance and dancers from the day of its inception. Sudharani Raghupathy, an international celebrity in Bharathanatyam and Mudurai. N. Krishnan, a great exponent of Karnatak music are noted for preservation of the pristine purity of their respective disciplines of art. No wonder Shree Bharathalaya, pursuing a holistic and value-based approach to human development, provides an authentic and a high level training in Bharathanatyam, Karnatak music and other related fields to well selected students whose competence, knowledge, skills and attitudes mark them

out not only as accomplished dancers but also cultured individuals.

Shri R. Venkataraman, former President of India, and a great connoisseur of art and culture of India, presided over the first day of its celebrations and released "*Madura Margam*" - a compilation of select compositions of Vidwan Madurai. N. Krishnan, both in the form of audio cassettes and book. The first copy of the book released by him and the first copy of the cassette released by Smt. Janaki Venkataraman were received by Smt. Vyjayanthimala Bali, a renowned dancer.

Salutations were paid to Shri. K.P. Kittappa, a doyen among Bharathanatyam Gurus and a direct descendant of the Tanjore Quartet, Shri. K.P. Sivanandam Pillai, an eminent Veena artiste and another direct descendant of the Tanjore Quartet and his wife Smt. Sarada Sivanandam who is also an accomplished Veena artiste. The following artistes, art administrators, art critics and patrons of art were honoured with awards, medals and garlands in recognition of their meritorious service and contribution to the development of fine arts: Smt. Vyjayanthimala Bali, Shri Nalli Kuppusamy Chetty, Sri. P.V. Subramaniam (Subbudu), Sri B.V.K. Sastry, Sri. R. Yagnaraman, Sri. R. Krishnaswamy, Smt. Y.G. Parthasarathy, Madurai K. Vaidyanathan, Smt. S. Rajeswari, Anita and Prita Ratnam, Smt. Manjula Lusti Narasimhan of Geneva. The first day's function so beautifully organised and aesthetically presented by Sudharani Raghupathy came to a close with a scintillating dance recital of Vyjayanthimala. Earlier Manjula Lusti Narasimhan, Anita and Prita Ratnam and the students of Bharathalaya enraptured the audience with their short and lovely dance recitals.

Hon'ble Sri. Sedapatti Muthiah, Speaker of the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly, presided over the second day's proceedings. Dr. Premlata Puri, Director, CCRT, New Delhi was the special guest. *Laghu Bharatham*, a comprehensive handbook on Bharathanatyam along with an accompanying double cassette album was released by Sri Muthiah and the first copies were received by Ms. Lakshmi Viswanathan, a noted exponent of Bharathanatyam and a writer of great calibre. An audio compilation of selected compositions of late Smt. Ambujam Krishna titled *Krishna Prabhavam* was released by Mrs. Radha Parthasarathy, the beloved daughter of the composer and the first copy of the audio cassette was received by Padmashri Smt. Chitra Visweswaran, another noted exponent of Bharathanatyam. The great personalities honoured in recognition of their contribution and service to the cause of fine arts were : Ms. Lakshmi Viswanathan, Mrs. Chitra Visweswaran, Sri T.S. Parthasarathy, Sri Thangaswamy Sarma, Sruti N. Patta bhiraman, Sri V.A.K. Ranga Rao, Sri. M.Venkatakrishnan, Sri R.Rajagopal, Sri. Adyar K. Lakshmanan, Sri N. Srinivasa Iyengar, Smt. Padma Rajagopal, Sri. R. Kannan and Sri. A. Lakshman. The second day's function came to a close with a zestful dance recital by Chitra Visweswaran. Earlier the audience was treated to delightful dance programmes of Lakshmi Viswanathan, A. Lakshman and Vanitha Nagarajan.

The concluding day's function was presided over by no less a person than Padma Bhusan Dr. Semmangudi Srinivasier, the Bhishmapitha of Karnatak Music. Shri. Shasikant Kapoor, the Director General of All India Radio, New Delhi, was the chief guest of the evening. *Ariyakudi Traditions*, a cassette of select compositions rendered by Vidwan Madurai N. Krishnan in the Ariyakudi Bani was

released by Sri Kapoor and the first copy was received by Sangita Kalanidhi Smt. Mani Krishnaswami. *Thillanas*, an audio cassette of Tillana compositions of Vidwan Madurai, N. Krishnan was also released by him and the first copy was received by Dr. Padma Subramanyam, the world-renowned Bharata Nrityam danseuse.

Those honoured at the hands Dr. Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer in recognition of their service and contribution for the growth and development of fine arts and culture were Sri.U.S. Krishna Rao, Smt.Chandrabhaga Devi, Dr. Padma Subramanyam, Sri. P.Obul Reddy, Sri C.V. Narasimhan, former Deputy Secretary-General of the U.N.O., Sri K.S. Mahadevan (founder-Editor of SHANMUKHA) Sri. Keshav Kothari, former Secretary of Central Sangeet Natak Akademy, Sri.Manna Srinivasan of *Sruti*, Smt. N.S. Jayalakshmi of Kalakshetra, Sri. J. Suryanarayanamoorthy, Smt. Padma Srinivasaraghavan, Smt. Nalini Prakash, Smt. Smita Karpur Magal and Smt. Priya Murali.

The function was followed by an exquisite and a vibrant dance recital of Dr. Padma Subramanyam. Earlier dance performances of shorter duration were rendered by Suryanarayanamoorthy, V.A.K. Ranga Rao, Kalaimamani K.J. Sarasa. The senior disciples of Sudharani Raghupathy also performed a few excerpts from the dance drama *Krishna Prabhavam* whose dance music was composed by Vidwan Madurai N. Krishnan.

Ms. Asha Vijayaraghavan, a trustee of Shree Bharathalaya proposed a vote of thanks. The art lovers of Madras on the whole, who had been treated with a dance extravaganza, unique in conception and presentation under the watchful eyes of Dr.Sudharani Raghupathy and Vidwan Madurai N. Krishnan, would carry pleasant memories of this cultural event for a long time to come.

- Filed by Dr. K.L. Raman

SRI SHANMUKHANANDA FINE ARTS & SANGEETHA SABHA (REGD.)

292 Jayshankar Yagnik Marg, Bombay - 400 022.
Phone : 409 22 11, 409 22 44, 407 88 88

PANDAL PROGRAMMES

2-DAY WINTER FESTIVAL OF MUSIC & DANCE (NOVEMBER 1995)

Programmes Co-sponsored by

Canara Bank

Synergy Credit Corporation Ltd., Bombay

Kitty Steels Ltd., Hyderabad

PROGRAMMES

25-11-1995 SATURDAY - 6.00 P.M.

R. PRASANNA (Boston, U.S.A)	—	Guitar in Carnatic Music
Shri M. A. Sundaresan	—	Violin
Shri Mannargudi A. Easwaran	—	Mridangam
Shri T. H. Subashchandra	—	Ghatam

26-11-1995 SUNDAY - 6.00 p.m

Ms. MALAVIKA SARUKKAI	—	Bharatanatyam
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FELICITATION : Our valued colleague Shri S. SESHADRI (Hon. Secretary) will be felicitated for his outstanding and meritorious services to the cause of preservation, propagation and promotion of Music and other Fine Arts for well over five decades, at the Pandal performance on 26th November 1995.

3-DAY NEW YEAR FESTIVAL OF MUSIC

Programmes Co-sponsored by

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PROGRAMMES

26-1-1996 FRIDAY - 6.00 P.M.

BOMBAY SISTERS	—	Vocal
(Smt. C. Saroja & Smt. C. Lalitha)		
Shri M. A. Sundaresan	—	Violin
Shri Bangalore Arjun Kumar	—	Mridangam
Shri N. Govindarajan	—	Ghatam

27-1-1996 SATURDAY - 6.00 p.m.

Shri Trivandrum K. S. GOPALAKRISHNAN	—	Flute Recital
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28-1-1996 SUNDAY - 6.00 p.m.

Shri O.S. THIYAGARAJAN	—	Vocal
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Accompanying Artistes for both the Concerts

Shri Mysore M. Nagaraj — Violin
 Shri Guruvayur Dorai — Mridangam
 Shri Rajesh Srinivasan — Kanjira
 Venue : **INDIAN GYMKHANA GROUNDS**, Matunga, Bombay - 400 019.

**SAVANTS' DAY CELEBRATIONS
 SANGEETANJALI**

Venue : **First Floor Foyer; Sabha Premises**

- | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. 10-12-1995
Sunday 6.00 p.m. - 9.00 p.m. | SUBRAMANYA BHARATIYAR DAY |
| 2. 24-12-1995
Sunday 6.00 p.m. - 9.00 p.m. | MAHARAJA SWATI TIRUNAL DAY |
| 3. 10-1-1996
A) Wednesday
8.30 a.m. - 9.30 a.m. | SAINT TYAGARAJA ARADHANA
Group Rendition of Pancharatna Kritis |
| B) 7.00 p.m. - 9.30 a.m. | MUSIC CONCERTS |
| C) 11-1-1996 Thursday
7.00 p.m. - 9.30 p.m. | MUSIC CONCERTS |
| 4. 20-1-1996
Saturday 6.00 p.m. - 9.00 p.m. | SAINT PURANDARADASA DAY |
| 5. 21-1-1996
Sunday 6.00 p.m. - 9.00 p.m. | SYAMA SASTRI DAY |
| 6. 11-2-1996
Sunday
6.00 p.m. | PAPANASAM SIVAN DAY. An evening exclusively with "SIVAN KRITIS" by his fast rising Star grandson SHRI ASHOK RAMANI & PARTY - Vocal Recital |
| 7. 24-2-1996 Saturday
6.30 - 8.30 p.m. | VISHNU DIGAMBAR PALUSKAR DAY |
| 8. 23-3-1996
Saturday 6.30 p.m. - 8.30 p.m. | VISHNU NARAYAN BHATKHANDE DAY |

"IDENTIFYING HINDUSTANI RAGAS" — A SUNDAY MORNING WITH AN ENLIGHTENING

Lecture-Demonstration by the eminent Musician-Musicologist -Journalist
SMT. SAKUNTALA NARASIMHAN
 on 17-12-1995 - Sunday - 11.00 a.m. at **Sabha** premises

REPUBLIC DAY EVE CELEBRATIONS

in association with Bharatiya Kala Vidya Kendra — **SANGEETHANJALI TO NATION**
 25-1-1996 - 6.00 P.M.

Venue : **First Floor Foyer, Sabha Premises**

For reasons of economy, this programme pamphlet is one time issue only for programmes publicised. Hence members are requested to preserve this pamphlet.

S. Seshadri
V. Rangaraj
 Hon. Secretaries

'STARS' ON THE HORIZON

Monsoon might have failed 'Mumbai' but not melody. During the 'monsoon sessions' of Talent Promotion Festival we had varied showers of melody. Pleasing heavy downpour, thunder storm etc. And Shanmukhananda Sangeetha Sabha could justifiably be proud of scouting and promoting the talents both at home and elsewhere. Quite a number of them stood out promising.

The month of August started on an auspicious note with Priya Ramachandran regaling the audience with chaste classical music. In her very maiden performance she made an impress. Trained by her mother Jayalakshmi Ramachandran, herself a vocalist of mark, Priya showed a rare flair for Vilamba grace and imaginative subtlety. Her accompanists, Madhavan (Violin) and Sankaranarayanan (Mridangam), already well up in the performing forum, gave fillip to her performance.

Opening with Lathangi Varnam her choice of Kannada Raga Kriti *Sri Mathrubhutham*, before settling on to a substantive Simhendramadhyamam set a refreshing melodic atmosphere. Bhava could easily be perceived in her system. She evoked various shades of poignance in the performance. In the two elaborate Ragas, Simhendramadhyamam and Kambhoji, she delineated, two facets of poignance came to fore. While it gushed forth in Simhendramadhyamam, it glided with a sedate grace in Kambhoji. While one thrilled you, the other twanged the heartstrings. And in both her melodious voice traversed the octaves with ease. Mysore Vasudevachar's *Ninne nammitinayya* in the former and *Evarimata Vinnavo* in the latter carried the mood the Alapana set forth. The Pataanthara, the Niraval Paddhati and the Swara

fluency in both bore testimony to her proper training and indepth involvement.

The quickies she wove through in between like *Trilokamatha* (Pharaz), *Kaa Vaa Vaa* (Varali), and the Kalyani Javali *Endati Kuluke* and *Thukkadas* all gave fillip to the concert.

Madhavan was great inspiration participating with equal zest and placidity in the Alapana and alacrity in Swaraprasarthas. He lent an impressive hand in the build up of the two Alapanas with professional poise. Equally inspiring was Sankaranarayanan whose strokes synchronised with Priya's imagination and whose Thani artistically capped the Kambhoji suite.

Sharing the day with her was Subhashini in a dance recital. A senior student of Sri Rajarajeswari Bharata Natya Kala Mandir, Subhashini showed signs of melting down in her Nritta and a bit still mechanical in expression. The repertoire comprising Kavuthvams, Sivan's *Mahalakshmi* (Sankarabharanam), Kambhoji Varnam *Nadani Azhaithtuva*, Bharatiyar's *Chinnanchirukiliye*, Natakuranji Tillana and Tiruppavai were imaginatively choreographed and supported with a well-knit orchestra under the command of Vasant Kumar.

While acquitting herself with precision in Varnam the dancer required more of innate bhava to reflect the varied shades of Vatsalya in Bharatiyar's piece. Her Tiruppavai was a scoring point.

The Chitra Veena family is coming to forefort in both Vocal and instrumental fronts. While the elder Ravi Kiran has entrenched himself as Chitra Veena maestro his siblings, Kiranavali has toed

his line doing her turn on the instrument while Shashikiran does his rounds as vocalist. Both the younger artistes were featured in the TPF during August and September respectively.

A painter - musician, the tone-colour the depth and dimension, shades and sparkles came so natural to Kiranavati. Her tonal picturisation of Bhava of the Ragas on Chitra Veena were soothingly melodious. Nowhere did she tend to be violent with her 'Gotu'.

After the Sri Raga Pancharatna, the strains of Pantuvarali were enhanced in the meaningful rendition of *Appa Ramabhakti*. The Gayaki style was predominant throughout and that is the essence of this Chitra Veena family's style. Again the family's trait of performing Niraval to the Kritis was highlighted by Kiranavati and that too with excellent Sahitya sense.

Her Bhairavi was a picture of rare charm and grandeur. Starting in the base in bold relief, she delved deep with fine deflection gradually proceeding to the middle octave. The build up was soft, graceful with touches of fine tonal elegance. Syama Sastri's Swarajathi glowed in this refined structure. One perceived her playing for self-enjoyment, self-fulfilment when she took up the stance *Syama Krishna Sahodari Siva Sankari Parameswari*, for Niraval. So much involved was she in the Sahitya Vinyasa on the melodic plane.

Kalyani in an RTP suite further enhanced her musical excellence. It was the familiar *Taraka Brahma Swarapuni*...in Adi Tala but the Alapana, Vinyasa and Swaraprastharas from different take off planks made it an artistic creation.

Accompanying her were youngsters from musical Parampara. Murari (Violin), son of V.V. Subramaniam played with confidence, though at times he tended to be 'loud. But he was discreet to give soft

'Sangat' whenever Kiranavati delved into delicate phrases.

Soft Mridangam is very rare to come by these days. Ganapathy Raman (from the family of Papanasam Sivan's Sishya Parampara), disciple of Rajappa Iyer has that deft delicacy in him. And his nuances and intricacies, delicate and soft, certainly added to the tonal impact of the Chitra Veena Cutcheri.

The concert of Shashikiran (Sept.) was again one in the line of good style. He maintained throughout the Vilamba Kala grace. The musical lineage spoke for itself. His Alapanas were explorative and Swaras imaginative. No frivolous frills. Mayamalavagoula (*Deva Deva*), Ritigowla (*Guruvayurappane*) were fine pieces. Sankarabharanam (*Swararaga Sudharasa*) and Shanmukhapriya (RTP) stood in their Sampradayik grandeur, though carved out in a new angled approach. Not an applause - oriented number, Shashikiran's elaborations rallied more in middle - octave where he could weave his patterns with ease. The Pallavi in Khanda Tripata was treated to a sequence of Swaraprastharas in Trikala Tisra Anuloma Eduppu not usually ventured, and with ease.

Hemalatha (Violin) and M.S. Varadan (Mridangam), another of Rajappa Iyer's disciple did well in their supportive roles.

Music of thundershowers, at times melodic downpour. That is how one could feel about O.V. Arun's concert on the Independence Day. Flanked with veteran accompanists Delhi Sunderrajan (Violin) and Trichur Narendran (Mridangam), this popular vocalist who enriches many a dance wing in the Capital and abroad showed his mettle centre stage too. A bass voice, resonant and resilient, a well-knit Pataantara and an imaginative mind-what more is needed to make a great success of the programme. An indiscreet mike

sense and resort to loud vocalism were the grey patches that jarred an otherwise excellent concert.

Arun may be said to be reared in a 'concert' atmosphere. His father O.V. Subramaniam is one of the ideal teachers of Karnatak music and his brother O.S. Thiagarajan is already a top vocalist. Little wonder that Arun, blessed with a pliable voice could ply his way through concert craft with exquisite ease. He sported an inclination to Hindustani shades but that was not intrusive, they only added colours. His Amritha Varshini and Begade shone in their splendrous glory. A few frills here and there did not mar their beauty, *Sudhamayi* and *Vaa Muruga Vaa* were exquisitely rendered with Swara flourishes. Sunderrajan excelled with some Suniquely sedate phrasings.

A well started Bhairavi broke midway with overfrilled brikkas but made up later on with involved enunciation. Arun compensated with a slow-paced *Balagopala* with all fold elaboration of Niramval and swaras.

One should commend his *Uchcharan* and the feel of Sahitya. Only if he were discreet with mike!

Sunderrajan and Narendran rose to their roles as maestros. They embellished each phase of the concert though Narendran had to exert at times in order to make himself audible.

It was perhaps a coincidence that most of the talents in the series were scions of a musical Parampara. One more in the lineage was Bhanumathy, a great grand daughter of Gayaka Sikhmani Palghat Anantarama Bhagavathar. Trained at home by her mother Subbulakshmi she displayed a quiet confidence in her well practised concert presentation.

Voice fluency, mellifluity and expansive range are her scoring points. Availing of

these she seemed to go in for effect oriented rendition, and rare - charm phraseology. Her Kalyani, Todi Alapana had many a beauty spot and scalic charm, with elaborate spin ups. The same could have been made substantive with pauses (Karvai), slow-paced phrases and the like. Then the compact *Pankajalochana* and *Kaddanuvrika* with Alapana, Niraval, Swaras would have had the impact. Bhanumathy has all the talent and promise, she has only to step into intuitive exploration.

Meera Mahadevan on the Violin, made a docile and soft success of her debut on the T.PF. Her solo strips were brief and good. Rajesh Srinivasan (Mridangam), an experienced hand, extended a solid support. His intricate Thani after Todi Kritis was crisp and creative.

Shanti Mahesh, of the Karaikkudi house, who played on the Veena later lived up to the family reputation. The Gamaka grace and Tana phases enlivened the style which highlighted again a Gayaki form, giving the compositions their 'life' and substance.

A confident and competent concert artiste she displayed good imagination and control in the Shanmukhapriya Ragam - Tanam - Pallavi suite. The Tanamalika weaving Mohanam, Hamsanandi, Sindhu Bhairavi, Behag, Kapi etc., was a colourful garland. And the Vinyasa plus Swaraprastharas had a spontaneity.

But the augmentation of nuances, courtesy, contact mike, more often than not jarred the delicacy of the Gamakas. Could not the grace of Veena be preserved in its native charm ?

Accompanying her on Mridangam was her husband Mahesh who played with restraint and reticence.

The close of September featured two vocalists, Pantulu Rama (of Vizag) and Mangalam Krishnamoorthy who showed great promise in concert presentation.

A rich voice, gamaka-oriented, and a rich Pataanthara, made Pantulu Rama's concert an experience to relish. Her singing had a feel of the Sahitya too; needless to say she enjoyed her moments of creativity.

Purvi Kalyani, Bhairavi and Kalyani (RTP), each one excelled the other in her Alapana efforts. Ananda Natamaduar sung with gusto had Swaras spun from different take off points.

If Bhairavi had a vintage beauty *Koluvaiyunnade* was steeped in its traditional grandeur. The Sangaathees, the Sancharas and the Swaras spoke of Rama's grip with the song structure.

After building up a solid structure of Kalyani, full of graces (gamakas) and pauses (Karvais), Rama resorted to stances of Sruti Bheda embellishment. And that added a dimension to the Alapana picture and it is how it should be.

Pity that many novices jump into the Sruti Bheda forays racing to the upper octave, even before establishing the firm contours of a Raga. Rama's calm and poise through the tight rope walk Pallavi in Tisra Jhampa Sankirna Nadai showed her mettle and spontaneity. More commendable when the Violinist had trouble steering clear through the Nadai, especially when they did the Trikala. The Mridangist was some support.

The Thukkadas too were in clear classical mould and evoked Vilamba poise.

Singing during the Navarathri, Mangalam Krishnamoorthy based her concert on Kritis on Devi and presented some rare gems. A disciple of Neela Ramgopal of Bangalore, Mangalam has had a stint of advanced training under Madurai T. N.

Seshagopalan. A combination of vintage and spirited musical idioms have helped her carve one of her own that is marked for mellifluous grace and poised Vilambam. Besides clarity of diction, she is equipped with proper Niraval approach and Alapana paddhati.

If Ananda Bhairavi and Nalinakanti moved on a measured frame highlighting their unique characteristics, Sankara bharanam gracefully gyrated in Visranti. The elaborate Alapana was followed by meaningful rendition of *Etutanilachite*. The Anupallavi *Nuduti Vradakani Mat-tumeeranu....* which is usually taken up for Niraval has so far been given a truncated treatment based mainly on melodic line giving little concern to the Sahitya essence. For once Mangalam did full justice to the stance making it a thematic elaboration. *Krupajoodavamma, Neepaadamegati Nalinakantimati, Sri Chakraraja Nilaye* were some of the rare gems she presented.

Mangala Vaidyanathan who has been steadily on the ascent gave an inspiring support on the Violin, both on the Raga front and Swara Sallies.

The duo presented an evocative RTP in Lathangi in Misra Chapu. The Karnarajani devotional *Om Namō Narayana* was another brilliant piece. With a professional Mridangam accompaniment by husband P.S. Krishnamoorthy, the concert rose to a quality team presentation. Murthy's Thani had a tonal clarity and finesse with finer intricacies. Which the Morsing artiste followed with ease.

Note: Script singing among the youngsters is generally on the increase. Which is not a very healthy sign. Young talents, aspiring to ascend the concert forum may first realise that Music is a creative art that cannot be hauled on a fast food track.

* * *

Kinnari

Festival of Naada Brahmam

The Music/Dance Festival arranged by Sri Naada Brahmam, Chembur, recently to celebrate the completion of ten years of their Music School commenced with the vocal concert of Kum. Chitra Sankar, a senior student of the music school. The young vocalist, who has a pleasing voice, showed good promise.

She opened her recital impressively with the Sreeraga Varnam. This was followed by "*Raktha Ganapatim*" and a rare composition of Dikshikar Kailasanathan (Kambhoji). (Mohanam) "*Brocheva*" (Sriranjani) "*Paripoornakama*" (Purvi Kalyani) was rendered elaborately with imaginative Swaraprastaras. The highlight of the concert was the "Ragam Thanam Pallavi" in Shanmukhapriya set to Tisra Triputa Tala. The alapana created a good impact on the discerning audience. The Ragamalika Swaras which followed the Pallavi bore testimony to the artiste's talent. Tillana in Sivaranjani and the Abhang in Bimplas were commendable.

The accompanying violinist was at his usual best and his performance uplifted the quality of the concert. Mr. Sridhar on the mridangam gave able support.

The second day of the festival began with the presentation of identical ragas (in

Hindustani and Carnatic systems of music) by Dr. Prakash Sangeet and Sri T.S. Anantharama Bhagavathar, well-known musicians in their respective fields.

After the "Ganesh Vandana", the musicians took up the Raga "Ahirbhairav" for elaboration. Though this Raga is very similar to Chakravakam of Karnatak, the difference in the "prayoga" of *Rishabha* was well brought out by the artistes. They rendered a Vittaladasa Kriti Rogaharana in this Raga separately one after the other unlike the Jugalbandhi. The melody patterns built up on these 2 Ragas having the same basic notes were quite distinct from each other. By adding individualistic flavour to the respective systems of music, they established a quick rapport with the appreciative audience.

The second half featured Raga Brindavana Saranga. A Swati Tirunal Composition in Hindi was rendered in this with the "Tanam" and "Boltaan" patterns. With their fertile imaginations, and aesthetically satisfying presentations, they kept the audience enthralled for more than two hours. Rajesh on Mridangam and Viswanath Misra on Tabla gave good support.

- L. S.



Musical Snippets from Vidyalaya

Ever since the Shanmukhananda Sangeetha Vidyalaya presented a full fledged Sangeethanjali to the Mahatma Gandhi and Maha Kavi Bharatiyar last year, such presentations have become a regular feature enthusing the students and inspiring the teachers. Reaching the kids through easy tunes and smaller songs have made teaching the Swaravalis and tough Varnas easier, as musical sense is inculcated in an easy way.

Giving a fillip to the 'National Day Celebrations', the sabha in collaboration with Bharatiya Kala Vidya Kendra, Bombay, celebrated the Independence Day and 125th Gandhi Jayanthi with a "Spirit of Unity" cultural programmes.

The former celebrated on the eve had professionals in Bhajan Session and Kavi Sammelan where some of the eminent poets recited poems in patriotic fervour. Notable among them were Bharatiyar's nephew and grandniece. The Kavyas were in Hindi, Marathi, Urdu, Tamil and Malayalam.

Naaznin Bharucha opened the session with sweet voiced evocative Bhajans. There was a short Bharata Natyam recital too by Gowri Krishnamoorthy comprising patriotic songs.

The Sangeetha Vidyalaya presented instrumental ensembles both in Hindustani and Karnatak streams. Leading 6-member team of Sitar students was Pt. Kartik Kumar, the renowned maestro on the staff, who ushered in a pleasant Hamsadhwani. The composition played under his lead by Parshuram Parchure (another staffer), Raju Raghavan, Shyamala Patrani, Nina Joshi and Rajendra Aphle was well received. The Tabla Sangat was given by Milind Joshi, also on the staff.

The selection for Karnatak instrumental ensemble comprising Veena, Violin,

Mridangam, Ghatam and Kanjira was from Subramanya Bharatiyar's *Vinayaka Nannimalai*, an invocatory piece, dedicated to Lord Vigneswara whom the poet propitiates as not only a remover of obstacles but also a bestower on all his devotees a sense of fearlessness, righteousness, self-respect and self-sufficiency a theme very relevant to the present day context.

Tuned in a Ragamalika, the music for the verses were composed by Kalyani Sharma a staffer on the vocal and Veena faculties, and those of interlinking strains tuned by Mangalam Muthuswamy, another staffer on the Veena. Garlanding Hamsadhwani, Hamsanandi, Kiravani, Valaji, Hamsanadam, Sriranjani and Madhyamavati, the Ragamala was a grand ensemble of melody.

THE PARTICIPANTS WERE:

VEENA

Janaki Krishnamoorthy }
M.S. Raghavendra } Students of Smt. Kalyani Sharma
L. Subramanian }

S. Vaidyanathan — Student of
Smt. Janaki Natarajan

V. Shobha }
C. Preethi } Students of
Rohini } Smt. Mangalam Muthuswamy

VIOLIN

N. Lakshmi Priya — }
Srivats } Students of
Smt. Visalam Vageeswar

PERCUSSION

Mridangam - Prasanna Kumar }
Ghatam - Krishna Kumar } Students of
Kanjira - Sriram S. } Shri T. S. Nandakumar

The Sangeethanjali on the Gandhi Jayanthi Day was another landmark presentation in that it coincided with Saraswathi Puja during the Navarathri. The Anjali certainly had Bhajans invoking God and Goddesses and patriotic songs both in classical and light modes dedicated to Bharath Matha and her great son, the Mahatma.

In the years past Saraswati Puja day used to be observed in pure classical 'meditation' with the rendition of Dikshitar's select "Navavarna Kritis", "Navagraha kritis and Swati Tirunal's "Navarathri Kritis". The Anjali was paid this year with a difference having a variety of musical presentations by the Vidyalaya students followed by rendition of poems by eminent poets, composed specially for the occasion.

After invocation to Lord Ganesha, the 'buds' of the Vidyalaya rendered brisk-paced Desh Bhakti Geet prepared by Rama Krishnaswamy, a staffer, to the accompaniment of Violin, Tabla and synthesiser.

The Diplomates of Music, Ganga Ramachander, Bhavani Srinivasan and Sugandha Athreya geared up (under the command of Ganga) to render multi-lingual Bhajans of our Saint poets and Abhangs so dear to the Mahatma. The flow of devotionals in Sanskrit, Hindi, Marathi, Gujarati, Punjabi etc., created a prayerful mood, the right spirit in Gandhi Jayanthi. Violin Harmonium and Tabla enhanced the devotional fervour.

Followed a more classical Bharath Bhajan Keertans composed by patriot - musician Mayuram Viswanatha Sastri and tuned by staffer Meera Nathan and rendered by her students, Rupa, Ranjani

THE PARTICIPANTS WERE:

VOCALIST 'BUDS': Anisha, Sangeetha, Smruti, Ananya, Smitha, Snigdha, Harini, Anisha, Deepa, Sangita and Dipti - students of Smt. Rama Krishnaswamy & Smt. R. Sakuntala.

VIOLINISTS: Kum. C. A. Radha - Disciple of Smt. Seetha Ramakrishnan
Kum. N. Lakshmi Priya - Student of Smt. Visalam Vageeswar (Staffer)

HARMONIUM : Shri Bal Bhade

MRIDANGAM: K. Kumar (Student of Staffer Shri T. S. Nandakumar)

TABLA : Staffer Shri Milind V. Joshi and his Gurubhai Shri Vinod Pawaskar.

SYNTHESISER : Shri Anees Chandani

CHORUS : Mythili, Mahalakshmi, Radha, Prasad, Sreejith, Preetam Charandas - students of Smt. Rama Krishnaswamy and Smt. Sakuntala.

and Keerthana to the accompaniment of Violin and Mridangam. The Ragas were all in modes common, to both the Indian shales of music.

The 'light' segment lit the ceremony with some rare 'hit's, including a Bengali patriotic lyric inspiring the youth to arise, awake and act. The production by Rama Krishnaswamy highlighted thematic perception.

Given the backdrop of Synthesiser, enhanced with twin Tabla lilt, and Violin strains, the three lead vocalists, Asha, Archana (Diplomates in Music) and Raghuram with chorus support rose to the occasion infusing patriotic fervour into each number, concluding the session with *Vaishnava Janato* and *Maitreem Bhajata*. It was a memorable occasion to the young talents when they earned a 'sabhash' for the song *Ithni Shakti Dena*. from its very composer poet Abhishek, who was present and participated in the latter half of verse - renditions.

The poets' performance, needless to say, rose to an intellectual plane, another facet highlighting the Mahatma's character and life.

Sakuntala Narasimhan's is a practical 'Study' on the Raga repertoire in Hindustani system adapted from the Southern idiom.

The dimensions of research from a performer's viewpoint is well presented by S. S. Haldankar. In his "Dimensions of Research in Music -A Performer's Viewpoint" he analyses how essential it is for the performer to have a knowledge of Ragas - the norms as regards maintaining their purity, identity etc. He emphasizes the need for research into the liberties that goes into "artiste's interpretation" in a serious practical level.

Not content with prescribing research-avenues Haldankar has himself taken initiative in getting musicians and musicologists into a 'dialogue' in a Seminar and bringing out a brochure titled *Ragon Ka Pramanikaran*, laying down the norm for 20 Ragas. Once the norms are laid down, the microtonal nuances the unique characteris of Ragas determined, then their emotive potentialities and 'mood' possibilities, Rasa evocation could be deeply delved into. The stress for a scientific approach in the study of music, an objective guideline to the researcher is made in this paper.

In his paper on "Tagore and Music Research". Sitansu Ray talks of Tagore's compositions being akin to "newer research-oriented Creativity." A thinker whose quest for new musical horizons took him more on emotional and aesthetic appeal of music rather than on purity of grammar, Tagore made a comparative study of the arts with special reference to poetry, painting and music, an essential feature of research. Tagore's musical impulse was not confined to Indian and Western systems alone. He lent an open ear to the music of world, and recorded his own comment. His comment on Khayal-singing, recorded in a correspondence with a professor, says Ray, in itself deserves research on "Aesthetico-structural Studies of Hindustani Music."

"Computer Applications to Music," is another stimulating essay, while the Reflection of student on Facilities for Research in Music" enumerates the various "Lacks", impediments in the scholastic venture.

The book is badly bound and one misses portions of articles of Tarlekar on Sanskrit Texts and that of Subhadra Chaudhary on Tala. Overlooking typographical errors and spellings it serves as a window opening into the vast research venues.

As if to allay the fears regarding research in music, there comes the "Directory of Doctoral Theses in Music, a timely publication, bringing to fore the activity that has been going on in this field since 1950.

The *Directory* is a neat, compact compilation, of Subjects undertaken for research, with details of the candidates names, the University, both Indian and foreign, where research has been undertaken, the year of award etc.

The data serves as a comprehensive index to the various topics covered in the field and opens up the scope for further research. While the *Directory*, its topical details may serve as "resource" material, the contents of the theses proper may give clue to source material, and an access to it too. Which may facilitate further research without or with less hazard. Further students would have less hardship in selecting a topic for research too.

Kudos to R.C. Mehta for having collected from all over, the material and published in a record time of two years. But is not the price a bit too high even as a reference book?

R. S.

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